University of Alberta

The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk During the Perestroika Era

by

Stefan Sokolowski

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

Department of History and Classics

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 2008

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Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-46985-9
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-46985-9

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ABSTRACT

During his lifetime, the Soviet Ukrainian popular composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk (1949-79) was denied official recognition on several occasions and his music was rarely performed in the years after he died under suspicious circumstances. Commemorations of Ivasiuk occurred in Lviv from 1979 onward and during the perestroika period several individuals began efforts to memorialize Ivasiuk and restore his reputation. The popular myth of Ivasiuk, as represented in the press, music festivals and various commemorative activities, was diverse and evolved between 1987 and 1991. Most initial public efforts to commemorate the composer were apolitical, later growing more critical of the Soviet regime. The myth of Ivasiuk probably reached the peak of its prominence in 1989, a transitional period when the attention of the public in Ukraine was shifting from cultural to political issues. By 1990-91, the myth of Ivasiuk became less prominent but more nationalistic, reflecting the growing popular focus on politics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Many individuals contributed to the completion of this thesis, although any errors remain my own. My supervisor, John-Paul Himka, suggested the topic and provided invaluable guidance. Bohdan Klid gave me access to essential sources which I could not have obtained otherwise. Nadya Foty, David Marples, and William Risch were also helpful with sources. I also wish to extend my thanks to the individuals who shared their recollections of Ukraine during the last few decades of the Soviet regime, thereby enriching this thesis to a significant degree. I am also grateful to the staff of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies for accommodating my research in the Stasiuk Programme Archives. Peter Larson and Peter Rolland provided assistance with Russian-language sources and John Sokolowski was helpful with Ukrainian-language translations. Research for this thesis was supported by a Marusia and Michael Dorosh Master's Fellowship from CIUS. Most of all, I thank Melodie Tower for her support over the course of the last several years.

For my parents, Karen Grove and John Sokolowski.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will examine portrayals of the Ukrainian composer and singer Volodymyr Ivasiuk (1949-1979) in the media and in popular commemorative activities devoted to the composer in the years between his death and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, with a particular focus on the 1987-91 period. Volodymyr Ivasiuk was revered by many Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians both during his career and after his death. Many people held Ivasiuk in high regard simply because of his artistic achievements. However, for at least some Ukrainians (in particular, nationally conscious individuals in Lviv, other parts of western Ukraine and to some degree Kyiv), Ivasiuk was not merely a "pop culture icon." For this group, the composer was also a national and political symbol.

Ivasiuk had symbolic value even during his life. The success of Ivasiuk's Ukrainian-language songs throughout the USSR and the world gave hope to many Ukrainians during the "period of stagnation" of the 1970s, when Ukrainian culture was moribund as a result of official repression. The myth of Ivasiuk thus had its roots in the 1970s, although it would grow and change after his death. When Ivasiuk died in mysterious circumstances at the age of 30, a myth of Ivasiuk as a martyr and a victim of the Soviet regime began to develop in Lviv. Many Lvivites believed that the composer had been killed by the KGB, and Ivasiuk's death and funeral became flashpoints for political discontent in the city. Ivasiuk was commemorated on a regular basis in Lviv in the years after 1979.

According to some prominent supporters of Ivasiuk's commemoration, certain Soviet bureaucrats attempted to discredit the composer and suppress his music in the years after his death. Whatever the truth of these claims, it was only in 1987 and 1988, as the Ukrainian press became somewhat freer, that Ivasiuk began to receive more attention in the media. A few individuals began to publicly express their support for the restoration of Ivasiuk's reputation and his commemoration through various means, most notably a music festival. The

early proposals for Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation" were often quite tentative, avoiding the topic of his death and not portraying Ivasiuk as a political symbol. Nonetheless, some of these early accounts denounced the limits placed on Ukrainian culture during the Brezhnev period or criticized the bureaucrats who supposedly slandered Ivasiuk and attempted to suppress his music. The Ivasiuk who emerges from many of the accounts of 1987-89 is an ambiguous figure—a nationally conscious Ukrainian and talented artist, a credit to his people, but not necessarily a symbol of Ukrainian nationalism or opposition to the Soviet state. Some observers even stressed Ivasiuk's loyalty to socialist principles or his music's pan-Soviet appeal.

For more radical Ukrainians, however, Ivasiuk was clearly associated with demands for significant political reform or even independence. In Lviv, commemorations on his grave were accompanied by expressions of nationalist political dissent as early as 1979. In later years, gatherings at Ivasiuk's grave continued to be forums for political protest, a practice which probably reached its peak in 1989. A commemorative ceremony for the composer which took place in Chernivtsi during the 1989 Chervona Ruta music festival also featured suppressed Ukrainian national symbols. Ivasiuk remained an ambiguous symbol in 1989, however, one whose usefulness was not limited to one particular ideological tendency. In one case, the composer's legacy was even used to oppose the nationalism of some performers at the 1989 Chervona Ruta festival.

Ivasiuk was particularly prominent in the official and unofficial press in 1989. This prominence was in part a reflection of the transitional nature of this moment in Ukrainian history. While Ukrainian opposition activists had become somewhat emboldened and were voicing increasingly open criticism of the Soviet regime, their political activity was still somewhat tentative and focused on relatively uncontroversial cultural issues (for example, the revival of the Ukrainian language or the preservation of historical monuments) rather than on more radical topics such as Ukrainian independence.

While the myth of Ivasiuk was diverse and relatively prominent in 1989, the situation changed in the following two years. In 1990 and 1991, the increasing radicalization of Ukrainian society was also reflected in the degree and nature of popular and media interest in Ivasiuk. On the one hand, the composer received less attention than had been the case in 1989, in part reflecting a widespread move away from cultural issues and towards political issues on the part of the Ukrainian public. On the other hand, the discourse on Ivasiuk from the last two years of the Soviet period is characterized by a more radical tone than in the past. During this period, Ivasiuk was more explicitly tied to such radical political causes as the struggle for Ukrainian independence.

An examination of the expressions of the myth of Ivasiuk from 1987 to 1991 indicates that the discourse on the composer underwent several changes during this period. First, a few prominent advocates took initial steps to inform the public about the details of Ivasiuk's life, restore the composer's reputation (which had ostensibly been tarnished by official slanders) and promote a few initial gestures to commemorate the composer. Second, Ivasiuk's supporters began to take a more critical approach to the composer's "rehabilitation," raising the unresolved issue of Ivasiuk's death, criticizing the official efforts to "silence" Ivasiuk, and tying calls for Ivasiuk's commemoration to broader criticisms of Soviet nationalities policy. Finally, public expressions of the myth of Ivasiuk became explicitly nationalistic as part of the increasingly radical politics of independence of the last few years of the USSR.

The efforts to "rehabilitate" and commemorate Ivasiuk during the 1987-91 period, as well as the changing myth of the composer, reflected the political and cultural context of the time. Ukrainian society during these years was characterized in part by an increasing desire to "fill in the blank spots of history," to discover the truth about the past which had been hidden by the authorities for so long. A major component of this process of reevaluating history was the dissemination of information on and the commemoration of figures who had been victims

of the Soviet regime, who had been denounced by the authorities, or whose memory had simply been suppressed. Ivasiuk was just one of many figures who were "rediscovered" or rehabilitated during the Gorbachev era. Two notable examples were the historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyi and the poet Vasyl Stus.

Andrew Wilson has pointed out the process whereby non-Soviet Ukrainian culture survived underground and then re-emerged during the Gorbachev era: "Despite the hostility of the Soviet state, social memory and the socialization of new generations helped to nurture traditional patterns of political culture and national myths and symbols in the private sphere, which were resuscitated with surprising ease in the late 1980s."[1]

The preservation of the myth of Ivasiuk in Lviv between 1979 and 1987 through clandestine commemorations at his grave fits into this pattern to some degree. However, Ivasiuk differs from other "national myths and symbols" because of his ambiguity. The composer is in some respects a unique symbolic figure, and it is for this reason that the emergence (or re-emergence) of varied and sometimes competing myths of Volodymyr Ivasiuk is worthy of study. The ambiguity of Ivasiuk's relationship with the Soviet regime separates him from many other suppressed figures from Ukrainian history who were reevaluated and commemorated during this period. Unlike many of the others, Ivasiuk was never sent to the Gulag or officially denounced as a "bourgeois nationalist" or fascist by the regime. While the composer did endure some more subtle forms of official hostility and disapproval, and his memory was never officially celebrated between 1979 and 1988, he was an ambiguous figure both in life and death— never truly embraced by the Soviet state nor branded its outright enemy.

The myth of Ivasiuk was a contested one. One of the most fascinating elements of the debate about Ivasiuk is the occasional dispute during the perestroika era about whether, or to

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[1] Wilson, Andrew Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s: a Minority Faith* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 194, 195.

what degree, the composer had in fact been a victim of the regime, whether his music had truly been suppressed by the authorities, and whether as a consequence he even required rehabilitation. In this respect, Ivasiuk has a great deal in common with the Ukrainian poet Vasyl Symonenko, who died of cancer in 1963. Despite the fact that Symonenko was never overtly repressed (although some of his works were censored) and he died of natural causes, the poet became a martyr and a symbol of the national cause to Ukrainian dissidents from the 1960s onward.[2] In the same manner, Ivasiuk's utility as a symbol outweighed the ambiguities of his life and death.

Even as a dominant myth of Ivasiuk (as a martyr, a victim of the Soviet regime, and a brilliant, nationally conscious artist) was beginning to emerge during the perestroika era, a few observers were critical of the process of mythmaking. Critics pointed out the discrepancy between the myth of Ivasiuk as a quasi-dissident and martyr who required "rehabilitation" and the reality of his life; questioned whether making Ivasiuk a national symbol was in fact a respectful and appropriate way of memorializing the composer; and argued that certain political activists had appropriated and distorted the myth of Ivasiuk for their own purposes without regard for the truth.

The Chervona Ruta music festivals of 1989 and 1991, which were held in Ivasiuk's honour, also inspired debates over the proper commemoration of the composer and, more generally, the direction the festivals (and, by extension, Ukrainian music) should take. Some observers argued that the festivals should devote much more time to showcasing Ivasiuk's music, while the organizers and other journalists insisted that Chervona Ruta should be devoted to developing new musical styles rather than paying homage to Ivasiuk and his older *estradna pisnia*[3] style.

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[2] Kenneth C. Farmer, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the Post-Stalin Era. Myth, Symbols and Ideology in Soviet Nationalities Policy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980), 101.

[3] All Russian and Ukrainian terms have been transliterated according to the Library of Congress system, with the omission of soft signs and diacritics.

Ukrainian Culture and Dissent under Brezhnev

In order to fully understand the era in which Volodymyr Ivasiuk lived and was commemorated, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of developments in cultural and political life in the Ukrainian SSR from the time of Leonid Brezhnev's accession to leadership of the Soviet Union during the mid-1960s to the point at which a broad revival of independent civic life began in Ukraine in 1987. The period in power of Brezhnev and his successors coincides roughly with Ivasiuk's musical career and postmortem mythologization.

During the years between Stalin's death in 1953 and the beginning of *glasnost* and *perestroika* under Mikhail Gorbachev during the mid-1980s, Soviet nationalities policy was characterized by a varying emphasis on one of four concepts: "*rastsvet*, the flowering or development of nations; *sblizhenie*, the drawing together or *rapprochement* of nations as a result of the building of a Union-wide economic, political and cultural unit; *sliianie*, the fusion of nations into a single nationality; and the emergence of a new historical community of people, the Soviet people—*Sovetskii narod*."[4] During the Brezhnev era, the concept of a new "Soviet people" was strongly emphasized. Bohdan Krawchenko argues that the ideological concepts of *sliianie* and the "Soviet people" were simply meant to obscure and justify the process of russification. Because Ukrainians and Belarusians were linguistically and culturally quite close to Russians, they were "singled out for a vanguard role in the processes of either merging, *rapprochement* or the rise of a new Soviet people."[5]

During the 1960s, the development of Ukrainian culture was characterized by two opposing tendencies. First of all, russifying policies continued to be implemented by Moscow. One notable example was the russification of education, which had begun under Khrushchev in the late 1950s and was viewed as another step towards the merging of the nations of the USSR. Fewer and fewer students were educated in Ukrainian during the 1960s

[4] Bohdan Krawchenko, *Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth-Century Ukraine*, paperback ed. (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987), 186, 187.
[5] Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 187.

and higher education was almost completely dominated by the use of Russian. Although many individuals in the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU), the press and the intelligentsia opposed the russification of education, their efforts to stop these changes were ultimately unsuccessful. As a result of these russifying policies dictated from the centre, the position of Ukrainian language and culture deteriorated to some degree during the 1960s. For example, the use of Ukrainian in government continued to decline, and the proportion of Ukrainian-language books in the total number of titles published each year fell during the 1960s as well.[6]

At the same time, much of the CPU leadership under Petro Shelest (who served as first secretary until 1972), as well as significant sectors of the intelligentsia and the general public, opposed further russification and attempted to raise the status of the Ukrainian language. Shelest expressed a great deal of support for preserving the Ukrainian language and expanding its use. During the 1960s, there were both open and veiled demands from intellectuals, the press, and some Party leaders to expand the use of Ukrainian or even make Ukrainian the official language of the Ukrainian SSR.[7]

The efforts of the republican authorities to demonstrate a measure of autonomy and promote Ukrainian culture during the 1960s led to a harsh reaction from Moscow. The Brezhnev regime was alarmed by what it saw as expressions of "nationalism" and "localism" in Ukraine. To rectify this problem, the central authorities launched the first large crackdown on dissent since Stalin's death, arresting several prominent Ukrainian dissidents in 1965. This wave of repression backfired, leading to public opposition from many Ukrainians, including several individuals who were prominent in the cultural and scientific fields.[8]

Certain Ukrainian cultural activities were repressed by the regime during the 1960s and (particularly) during the 1970s. Independent cultural activity (even if it was apparently

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[6] Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 202, 222, 230-233, 237.
[7] Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 199-201.
[8] Bohdan Nahaylo, *The Ukrainian Resurgence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 27, 28.

apolitical) was discouraged and sometimes severely punished by the authorities. The regime attempted to co-opt the interest in "antiquity," including folk music and historical monuments, which was prominent in Ukraine and the rest of the USSR during the 1960s, and the authorities were quick to repress independent or ideologically unacceptable expressions of folk culture. For example, ethnographic research into Ukrainian folk songs was discouraged, and participants in Ukrainian folk choirs which were not officially sanctioned were denounced as "nationalists" and sometimes otherwise repressed during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Kenneth Farmer argues that the regime's efforts to control folk music stemmed from its symbolic power: "authentic folk music is strongly evocative of the myth of national moral patrimony, and, as an elemental symbol of national identity, must be co-opted, neutralized, or suppressed."[9]

Another notable contested national symbol was Taras Shevchenko, the nineteenth-century poet and painter who is the most notable Ukrainian literary figure. The Soviet regime had co-opted Shevchenko from the 1930s onward, portraying him as a "revolutionary democrat," and the authorities were very sensitive to nationalistic interpretations of the poet. A stained-glass window created in Kyiv for the 150th anniversary of Shevchenko's birth in 1964 depicted Shevchenko as "a defender of the Ukrainians, implicitly against the Russians." The window was denounced as "ideologically harmful" by members of the Artists' Union and destroyed, supposedly by vandals. The Soviet regime was also extremely hostile to "the overtly nationalistic interpretation placed on Shevchenko by Ukrainians living in the west." Ukrainian dissidents claimed that the regime began removing Shevchenko from popular culture from 1964 onward. On May 22 of that year, a group of nationally conscious intellectuals also began commemorating the anniversary of the transfer of Shevchenko's body from St. Petersburg to Ukraine in what would became an annual clandestine celebration.[10]

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[9] Farmer, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 114, 115, 117-120.
[10] Farmer, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 111-114.

The Crackdown of the 1970s

Repression of Ukrainian culture was especially harsh during the 1970s. In July 1970, Vitalii Fedorchuk was named the head of the KGB in Ukraine. Fedorchuk would soon take a much harsher approach to dissent than his predecessor had. In January 1972, he initiated a major wave of arrests of dissidents, which soon expanded into a "broad political and cultural purge," that was to encompass even the CPU leadership—most prominently, Shelest. Many Ukrainian dissidents were arrested in 1972 and 1973 and sentenced to long prison terms. Some dissidents were committed to psychiatric hospitals, "nationally minded elements of the intelligentsia was purged," and "national Communists" were removed from the CPU leadership.[11]

Shelest was removed from his post in May 1972, as punishment for improperly carrying out his duties and fostering "a heretical tendency (Ukrainian nationalism) within the bosom of the party."[12] The charges directed against Shelest in 1973, after he had been purged, included: "failing to acknowledge nationalist deviations in the CPU and Ukrainian cultural circles during the 1920s, idealizing Ukrainian Cossacks, [and] ignoring the positive influence of Russian culture on Ukrainian culture and education..." A major purge of the CPU followed Shelest's removal.[13]

Shelest was replaced by the loyal Brezhnevist Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi. In response to the supposed ideological deviations of the Shelest years, the repression and purges of the early 1970s were followed by renewed russification. Valentyn Malanchuk became the ideological secretary of the CPU in October 1972 and initiated a major attack on expressions of Ukrainian national distinctiveness in culture and education: "restrictions on the development of Ukrainian studies, especially historical research and writing, and cultural life generally, were drastically tightened and educational and cultural institutes purged of

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[11] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 37, 38.
[12] Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 242.
[13] Krawchenko, *Social Change*, 249.

nationally minded individuals. All this was accompanied by a renewed emphasis on the 'unity' and 'closeness' of the Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians." The atmosphere of russification fostered an attitude that would later become known as "national nihilism"—a disdainful and cynical attitude towards one's native language and culture, and a readiness, for opportunistic and mercenary reasons, to go along with Russification and pass oneself off as a 'superinternationalist.'"[14]

Dissent in Ukraine from Brezhnev to the Early Gorbachev Period

The Ukrainian dissident movement of the 1960s and 1970s was ideologically diverse. Although radical nationalism continued to have some appeal among the population of western Ukraine during the 1960s and 1970s, most Ukrainians soon realized that armed resistance to Soviet rule, which had been pursued until the early 1950s in western Ukraine, was no longer feasible.[15]

During the 1960s, dissent was most widespread among the Ukrainian intelligentsia. The *shestydesiatnyky* were the most significant dissident group of the 1960s. They were led by individuals belonging to the Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia, including Ivan Drach and Viacheslav Chornovil. Their "generational and ideological roots lay in the Khrushchev thaw and the all-Soviet dissident movement rather than the wartime struggles of the UPA."[16]

The *shestydesiatnyky* fought for "a Ukrainian literary and poetic revival" and opposed Russification. They also tried to revive some national myths, symbols and heroes, such as Mykola Skrypnyk and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi. On the whole, the *shestydesiatnyky* rejected ethnic nationalism and did not take a radical approach: "Like other dissidents elsewhere in the USSR at this time…the leitmotiv of the *shestydesiatnyky* was individual

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[14] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 38-40.
[15] Andrew Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1990s: a Minority Faith* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press), 1997, 152, 153.
[16] Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 53.

rights and the rule of law." Nonetheless, there were some radicals among them, including Stepan Khmara. Valentyn Moroz, a prominent dissident who was critical of the *shestydesiatnyky*, was, according to Andrew Wilson, influenced by the integral nationalist thinker Dmytro Dontsov. Religious dissent, mainly in Galicia, was another element of the dissident movement.[17]

One of the most prominent dissident organizations of the 1970s was the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group, which was active between 1976 and 1980. The group focused on revealing violations of human and national rights. Many members were arrested and several received heavy prison sentences. This repressive reaction simply served to radicalize Ukrainian dissidents. In the 1970s, the movement shifted from moderate political activism which often focused on culture and as time went on increasing numbers of Ukrainian dissidents began to support independence from the USSR.[18]

The dissident movement achieved few tangible gains under Brezhnev, but its activities would have important long-term consequences. Wilson suggests that while the dissidents of the 1960s and 1970s achieved some success in bringing national dissent to central Ukraine, they appear to have had little support among the general public: "Anecdotal evidence suggests that the authorities were quite successful at isolating the dissidents, while the silent majority enjoyed slow but steady material improvements." At the same time, the dissident movement of the 1960s and 1970s facilitated the rise of open opposition during the perestroika period and would prove to have crucial symbolic value, furnishing "a powerful mythology on which the nationalists of the modern era were to draw heavily."[19]

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[17] Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 54, 55, 57.
[18] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 40, 41.
[19] Wilson, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 58.

Stagnation and Repression Continue

The 1970s and early 1980s were a "bleak period" for Ukrainian culture. The use of Ukrainian in everyday life, in publishing and in education continued to decline. Intellectuals like Iurii Badzo who attempted to point out the desperate situation received arrests and long prison sentences. However, after Malanchuk was removed from his position in April 1979, official restrictions on culture eased to some degree. The CPU attempted to reach a *modus vivendi* with the intelligentsia and "offered modest concessions in return for the cultural elite's help in rallying the population behind the Party's policies." There was an immediate revival in activity by members of the Writers' Union of Ukraine. Despite the slight thaw in the cultural field, the repression of dissent continued into the 1980s. Russification intensified during Iurii Andropov's brief tenure as leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). By this point, the only overt dissident movement in Ukraine consisted of activists for the legalization of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.[20]

While in one sense Ukraine during the mid-1980s appeared to be a paragon of Brezhnevist "stability," with dissent almost non-existent, the republic (and the rest of the Soviet Union) was undergoing a "deepening economic and social crisis" which the existing political and economic system was unable to resolve. The Ukrainian economy had begun to stagnate as the result of mismanagement and the deficiencies of a centrally planned economy operated from Moscow.[21]

Political and Cultural Developments in the Early Gorbachev Years, 1985-87

After Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed general secretary of the CPSU in March 1985, replacing Andropov's successor, the short-lived Konstantin Chernenko, it appeared that, despite Gorbachev's stated commitment to economic reform, there would be little

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[20] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 41-46.
[21] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 47.

change in nationalities policy in Ukraine. Although Gorbachev eventually began emphasizing his desire for *glasnost* (openness) in public life, the statements of Gorbachev and other Party leaders in 1985 indicated that the regime would continue to take a hard line towards dissent and that it was not on the verge of serious political liberalization. The crackdown on Ukrainian dissidents continued in 1985.[22]

The first loosening of restrictions on cultural figures during Gorbachev's tenure benefited Russia and not Ukraine. Eventually, the ideological climate in Ukraine started to become somewhat freer as well: "[b]y the spring of 1986, the first signs of measured *glasnost* started to become detectable in the Ukrainian press, though it was restricted to the exposure of inefficiency, wastage or corruption."[23]

The accident at the Chornobyl nuclear power plant in April 1986, and the Gorbachev regime's attendant withholding of information about the disaster served as catalysts for greater public interest in environmental activism and increasingly pointed criticism of the Soviet system. The response to the catastrophe by the authorities in Kyiv and Moscow convinced the population of the "extent of the bureaucratic indifference" of the authorities and particularly the "servility and self-interest" of the republican leaders. Chornobyl came to be viewed as a "national tragedy" for Ukraine, and its symbolic importance was broadened to encompass the suffering of Ukrainians during seven decades of Soviet rule.[24] The disaster emboldened Ukrainians, particularly young people, and inspired them to begin working for reform, in the sense that their fear of ecological catastrophe began to outweigh their fear of the regime. A physics student from Lviv later told Padraic Kenney that Chornobyl "forced people to stop fearing."[25]

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[22] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 53-55.
[23] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 56-58.
[24] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 59-61.
[25] Padraic Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance, 1987-1990," in *Lviv: A City in the Crossroads of Culture*, ed. John Czaplicka, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 303, 304.

The Ukrainian writers in particular were galvanized by the disaster and began to criticize the regime, albeit only tentatively at first. At the Ninth Congress of the Writers' Union of Ukraine (WUU) in June 1986, the novelist Oles Honchar called for the writers to become more involved in civic life. He argued that protecting Ukraine's natural environment and "cultural and linguistic 'environment' or heritage" were crucial priorities and condemned those individuals who showed contempt for the Ukrainian language. Ivan Drach made an electrifying speech which was "a devastating indictment of the Soviet system and its consequences for Ukraine." The speech included condemnations of russification and the famine of the 1930s. Although only a bowdlerized version of the speech was published in *Literaturna Ukraina*, the WUU newspaper, many writers would later view Drach's speech as "the first trumpet call of the Ukrainian national revolution."[26]

Despite the greater freedom for discussion of national issues enjoyed by the writers, during the second half of 1986 "it became increasingly clear that *glasnost* and *perestroika* were not being extended to the area of nationalities policy except in the case of the Russians." For example, only the Russian Orthodox Church was to play a role in the 1988 Millennium of Christianity in Kyivan Rus, and the upcoming celebration was depicted as the commemoration of a purely "Russian" heritage. Attacks in the official press on nationalism, the Ukrainian diaspora, and the Catholic Church continued.[27]

The writers continued to raise controversial topics during the remainder of 1986 and 1987. In late 1986, the writers turned to question of the "erasure of national memory," beginning with an article by Mykola Zhulynskyi in *Literaturna Ukraina*. Because the CPU still had firm control over historical research, writers and literary scholars began uncovering the concealed chapters of Ukrainian history. The process began with calls for the rehabilitation of suppressed figures in literature and culture and for the publishing of

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[26] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 60-63.
[27] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 65.

unexpurgated versions of major Ukrainian literary works. In February 1987, the writers began openly criticizing the russification of education. They were also prominent in a campaign against the construction of further nuclear power plants on the territory of Ukraine.[28]

Despite the increasing openness of the press and the efforts of the writers to effect reform in 1986 and 1987, Shcherbytskyi's approach to the nationalities question had not changed—he continued to promote further "internationalization" and oppose any rethinking of the regime's attitudes towards religion and history. At the same time, public interest in the "blank spots" in history, themes the regime did not wish to see discussed, began growing, partly because of the upcoming Millennium of Christianity in Kyivan Rus and because of research on the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s being carried out in the West.[29]

When the authorities in Kyiv refused to contemplate a serious reform of the increasingly russified education system, the WUU openly defied the CPU leadership at the WUU's June 1987 plenum. The event became "a demonstration of defiance and reviving national assertiveness." Members of the WUU demanded action on such issues as the enormous decline in the number of Ukrainian-language schools and the dire state of the Ukrainian language in general. They also called for reforms in historical research and the rehabilitation of figures such as Mykola Khvylovyi. After the plenum, Honchar appealed directly to Gorbachev with demands for the protection of the Ukrainian language, bypassing the republican authorities.[30]

Over the course of 1986 and 1987, the WUU "developed into a forceful patriotic pressure group…In the absence of independent national institutions or associations, the Ukrainian literary intelligentsia had become the main promoter of *glasnost*."[31] Thus the writers played a crucial role in beginning a mass movement for political and cultural change

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[28] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 66-67, 77.
[29] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 75, 76.
[30] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 76-83.
[31] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 83.

in the republic. However, 1987 would also see the beginning of a broader development of independent civic culture in Ukraine, as other groups of cultural and political activists began working openly for reform. The enormous cultural and political change of the 1987-91 period which followed the initial burst of activism by the Writers' Union will be addressed in the chapters that follow.

Chapter I: The Rise, Fall and Commemoration of a Pop Culture Icon, 1949-88

Volodymyr Ivasiuk achieved enormous success as a composer of popular music at a very young age. He truly became a star in late 1970, when his song "Chervona Ruta," which would become his most famous composition, was broadcast for the first time. Enormous popularity in Ukraine and the rest of the Soviet Union would follow soon afterwards. The composer would win several prestigious awards and become a "pop culture icon" during the 1970s.[32] Despite his enormous success during the decade, the 1970s would also bring several personal and professional setbacks for Ivasiuk. He was denied two prestigious awards, a sign that some individuals in positions of power were hostile towards him. Ivasiuk died in 1979 under tragic and mysterious circumstances.

The composer's funeral was attended by thousands of people and provided a focus for frustrations with the state of Ukrainian culture. Ivasiuk was commemorated regularly in Lviv after his death, although commemorative activities were discouraged by the authorities. After his death, Ivasiuk was rarely discussed in public and his music may have been officially suppressed. In the freer climate of the late 1980s, several individuals worked to "rehabilitate" Ivasiuk, for example, by granting him awards to which he was entitled. For many people in Lviv at least, Ivasiuk had important political significance during his life and gained even more significance after his death. The composer was often portrayed as a martyr of the Russifying regime of the Brezhnev era, although there were some indications that this narrative was not completely accurate.

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[32] Catherine Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage: Music and Change in Soviet Ukraine," in *Retuning Culture: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Mark Slobin (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 136.

Ivasiuk's Early Life and Career

Volodymyr Ivasiuk was born in the town of Kitsman, in Chernivtsi oblast (also known as the historic Ukrainian region of northern Bukovyna), on March 4, 1949. His parents were Mykhailo and Sofiia Ivasiuk.[33] Ivasiuk had a great interest in music from a very young age. He began attending music school in Kitsman at the age of five and was a talented violinist as an adolescent. After finishing the Ukrainian equivalent of junior high school (*serednia shkola*), Ivasiuk was admitted to a prestigious music high school (*desiatyrichka*) in Kyiv but had to end his attendance there due to illness. Instead, he pursued piano studies in Kitsman.[34]

In 1964, Ivasiuk wrote his first song, a lullaby based on a poem written by his father.[35] That same year, in Kitsman, Ivasiuk founded one of Ukraine's first Vocal-Instrumental Ensembles (*Vokalno-Instrumentalnyi Ansambl* or VIA), "Bukovynka."[36] VIA were officially-sanctioned ensembles which could only sing in Russian or Ukrainian and were only permitted to perform texts which had been approved by the state.[37] "Bukovynka," which performed Ukrainian traditional music, was well-received in the Kitsman area and also performed to large audiences in Kyiv and Chernivtsi. The ensemble's music was broadcast on radio and television, and songs written by Ivasiuk for the group received critical praise.[38] Soon after its founding, the musical group performed in Kyiv, and the concert was filmed and broadcast on Soviet television.[39]

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[33] "Osnovni daty zhyttia i tvorchosti Volodymyra Ivasiuka," in *Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Zhyttia—iak pisnia,* ed. Paraskoviia Nechaieva, (Chernivtsi: Bukrek, 2003), 207.
[34] Mykhailo Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos—shchedra povin," in *Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Zhyttia—iak pisnia*, 130, 131.
[35] "Osnovni daty," 207.
[36] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 132.
[37] Romana Bahry, "Rock Culture and Rock Music in Ukraine," in *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia,* ed. Sabrina Petra Ramet, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 243, 244.
[38] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 132.
[39] Ivan Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert Volodymyra Ivasiuka,"special issue, *Viisko Ukrainy*, June 1994, no. 6:14.

The Ivasiuk family then moved to the city of Chernivtsi, where Mykhailo Ivasiuk began teaching Ukrainian literature at the university.[40] Volodymyr Ivasiuk began studying at the Medical Institute in Chernivtsi in 1966. He was soon expelled due to a "political incident," (the details of this incident are unknown)[41] and so he began to work at the Lehmash factory. Ivasiuk continued his musical activities while working at Lehmash. He studied music by correspondence and soon began leading the factory choir and incorporating his own compositions into its repertoire. The success of the choir in oblast-level competitions inspired Ivasiuk to submit two of his songs to an oblast contest, where he won first prize.[42]

In 1967, Ivasiuk was once again admitted to the Medical Institute in Chernivtsi, which he attended until 1972.[43] The composer wrote additional songs even as he studied to become a physician. Ivasiuk's music was first performed by a professional singer when the Ukrainian singer Lidiia Vidash recorded his song "Ia pidu v daleki hory" for Ukrainian radio during the late 1960s. Vidash's recording brought Ivasiuk's music to the attention of all of Ukraine for the first time.[44] During this period, Ivasiuk's music began to gain popularity among young Ukrainians, particularly students.[45]

Ivasiuk's interest in Ukrainian traditional music also led him to engage in ethnographic research. He travelled to Bukovynian villages during the late 1960s and collected folk songs. According to the composer's father, Volodymyr Ivasiuk saw himself as following in the footsteps of the noted ethnographer Volodymyr Hnatiuk. In a 1906 scholarly book by Hnatiuk, "Kolomyika," Ivasiuk found the words to a song which mentioned the red rue (*chervona ruta*), a flower which was said to have magical powers. The composer became obsessed with the flower for three years and travelled to many villages to find the hidden

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[40] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 132.
[41] "Osnovni daty," 207.
[42] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 132.
[43] "Osnovni daty," 208.
[44] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 15; Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 132.
[45] Mykhailo Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, June 1987, 30.

meaning of the *chervona ruta*. In the village of Roztoky, in the Putylshchyna region, he recorded a retelling of the legend of the magical red rue, "which in folk tales was 'the symbol of pure and eternal love.'"[46] This flower would inspire Ivasiuk's most famous song.

Having found an account of the *chervona ruta*, Ivasiuk began working on the two songs which would contribute most to his enduring fame: "Chervona Ruta" and "Vodohrai" ("The Fountain"). Two friends of the composer who worked at the Chernivtsi oblast television studio helped bring the songs to the people of the city and oblast. On September 13, 1970, the television studio recorded a concert of several of Ivasiuk's songs from the Teatralna Square in Chernivtsi. Ivasiuk performed his songs himself, accompanied by a music teacher named Olena Kuznetsova. A large crowd gathered on the square while recording was underway and the flow of traffic in the area was stopped. Although numerous takes were required before the performance was acceptable to the producers, the live recording and eventual broadcast of the concert caused a sensation in the city.[47] To Ivan Lepsha, this was the high point of Ivasiuk's career, although more successes would come in the following years.[48] The concert in Chernivtsi began Ivasiuk's road to stardom.

Ivasiuk's music combined elements of Ukrainian traditional music with popular music and jazz. Other composers, such as Ihor Bilozir, also composed music in this style during the 1970s. According to William Risch, the composition of this style of "Soviet Ukrainian pop" by amateur composers was actively fostered by government and party officials in both Ukraine and Moscow.[49]

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[46] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 133.
[47] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 133; Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," 31; Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 15.
[48] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 15.
[49] William Jay Risch, "Island of Freedom: Lviv and the Disintegration of the Soviet Union, 1944-89," book manuscript, 2007, 152.

Ivasiuk's Music Achieves Mass Popularity

After the pivotal concert and broadcast in his native Chernivtsi oblast, Ivasiuk's songs, especially "Chervona Ruta," soon spread throughout the Soviet Union. The two new songs ("Chervona Ruta" and "Vodohrai") were broadcast on television to the entire republic for the first time on October 13, 1970.[50] The composer's music soon became popular in Moscow, apparently due to the efforts of the Ukrainian performers Nazarii Iaremchuk and Vasyl Zinkevych.[51]

Zinkevych recalled the enormous impact of Ivasiuk's music on youth at this time, noting that people who were young during the second half of the 1960s "remember well how Volodymyr Ivasiuk's song 'Chervona Ruta' flew into the wide world like a spring whirlwind (*vykhor*), like a fast-moving (*strimkyi*) bird." Zinkevych also emphasized the widespread appeal of "Chervona Ruta" to people from many backgrounds; the song "was played everywhere--on the professional and amateur stages, on television, at student gatherings and village weddings, in the tents of geologists and at border posts." The performer explained the song's popularity as a result of its authenticity and honesty: "This was not a borrowed song; rather, it was as if the people (*narod*) itself had written the song..."[52]

Lepsha describes an encounter from the 1974 Komsomol (Communist Youth League) congress in Kyiv, where Ivasiuk was a delegate, which illustrates the love young people had for the composer: "Volodia was truly the favourite (*uliublenets*) of his generation. During the intermission...Ivasiuk was surrounded by boys and girls and someone handed him a guitar over the heads of the crowd." The crowd called out for "Chervona Ruta" and Ivasiuk sang the song, with the entire hall singing the chorus." The delegates then asked him for

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[50] Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," 31.
[51] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 16.
[52] Quoted in Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 16.

autographs and shook his hand. Ivasiuk was embarrassed by the attention and surprised that even in Kyiv "Chervona Ruta" was extremely popular.[53]

Ivasiuk was also invited to be the guest of schools, workplaces and villages. He particularly enjoyed visiting the collective farmers of the village of Sankivtsi in Bukovyna, where he performed and spoke. Ivasiuk's visit to the village was such a popular event that the hall provided for the occasion could not accommodate all those present.[54]

Despite Ivasiuk's enormous popularity during the 1970s and after his death, his appeal was not universal. Some rock music fans in Lviv disliked Ivasiuk's relatively conservative style, comparing him to Iosyp Kobzon, "the Russian Soviet pop artist of the 1960s and 1970s known for his Frank Sinatra-style romances and songs glorifying the Communist Youth, heroes from World War Two, and other schmaltzy themes."[55] Mykola Ryabchuk notes that Ivasiuk was to some degree following the "naïve" and "folkloristic" motifs of all officially-sanctioned Ukrainian music—perhaps because the composer consciously produced music that would be acceptable to the authorities (and therefore have a chance of widespread success) or because of his inherent conservatism.[56]

While some rock fans in Lviv disliked Ivasiuk, Ivasiuk's fusion of pop, jazz and traditional music had broader appeal than rock music in Lviv and in the villages of western Ukraine. Adolescents in western Ukrainian villages during the 1970s were likely to prefer the music of Ivasiuk to rock or disco, two other popular styles of the era. William Jay Risch cites an incident which reflected the popularity of Ivasiuk's "Chervona Ruta" among young people in Lviv soon after the song was released: "a newspaper in 1971 reported of one drunken vocational school student, trying to crash an elegant ball the city's Opera Theater, belting out

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[53] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 40.
[54] Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," 31.
[55] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 155.
[56] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.

its first lines before being hauled away by volunteer security guards."[57] Ivasiuk's music truly became the common heritage of several generations. According to Risch, "[f]or postwar generations, Ivasiuk's music (as performed by Nazariy Iaremchuk and others) became their music, alongside the 'legendary Beatles' and the French pop singer Joe Dassin."[58]

Risch argues that Ivasiuk's music, along with that of Ukrainian composer Ihor Bilozir, served to unite Lvivites from varying backgrounds—both those who had recently arrived in the city from villages or other regions of Ukraine and those who had long lived in the city. Ivasiuk's music also appealed to both the young and old. The Ukrainian composer's broad appeal made him similar to the Russian singer, composer and actor Vladimir Vysotskii, who was enormously popular among people of all ages throughout the Soviet Union. As a result, "Ivasiuk, and to an extent Bilozir, brought together Ukrainians from different regions and different generations, further strengthening L'viv's Ukrainian identity."[59]

For nationally conscious Ukrainians, Ivasiuk's popularity also served as inspiration during the 1970s--a dark time for Ukrainian culture. According to Mykola Ryabchuk, the fact that Ivasiuk's songs were written in Ukrainian, and became popular throughout the Soviet Union, affirmed the potential of Ukrainian culture to be modern and popular. The 1970s were a time of increasing Russification and stagnation in Ukrainian culture; the number of quality books published in Ukrainian was continuously decreasing. Ukrainian music was also "deliberately provincialized," relegated to the realm of folklore, as part of the regime's efforts to "persuade people that Ukrainian is not suitable for anything modern and really popular." In this atmosphere, Ivasiuk's success gave hope to those who wished to preserve and develop Ukrainian language and culture.[60] It is ironic that Ivasiuk achieved some of his greatest

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[57] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 155.
[58] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 155.
[59] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 155-56.
[60] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.

successes during the early 1970s, a time when Ukrainian culture was under attack on many fronts.

Ivasiuk the Icon: 1971-79

Volodymyr Ivasiuk enjoyed more success after the breakthrough of September 1970. Most notably, Ivasiuk's music was recognized in the Soviet capital. "Chervona Ruta" won the all-Union "Song of the year" festival in Moscow in 1971 and "Vodohrai" achieved the same honour in 1972. Ivasiuk and Nazarii Iaremchuk performed the winning song at the closing concert of the 1971 festival. In 1971, the film director Roman Oleksiv produced the television film "Chervona Ruta," which featured Ivasiuk's songs as performed by Sofiia Rotaru and Vasyl Zinkevych. In 1972, Ivasiuk's "Vodohrai" won a televised all-Union song competition as well. Ivasiuk's success in all-Union competitions was particularly noteworthy, as this had never been achieved by any "official" Ukrainian composer (one who was a member of the Composers' Union of Ukraine), let alone by an "amateur" like Ivasiuk.[61]

In 1972, Ivasiuk moved to Lviv, where he completed his medical education and enrolled in the Conservatory of Music. Around this time, the composer expressed his desire to move beyond popular music and become a "serious" composer. Ivasiuk complained to his father that, although the Ukrainian nation was known for its musical talent, it had produced no great composers (with the exception of Mykola Lysenko). It was Volodymyr Ivasiuk's intention to fill this vacuum in Ukrainian culture and become the Ukrainian equivalent of Franz Schubert.[62] The poet Iurii Rybchynskyi, who collaborated with Ivasiuk during the 1970s, claimed that Ivasiuk was very modest and had little interest in fame because he was a "true artist" who sought to become a "Great Composer."[63]

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[61] Ivasiuk, "Tvii holos," 133, 134; "Osnovni daty," 208; Lepsha, *Zhyttia i smert*, 16.
[62] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 17.
[63] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 30.

Despite Ivasiuk's enormous popularity and success, the composer experienced hostility from several quarters after he arrived in Lviv. First of all, the classical music establishment in the city showed little respect for his work. On the day in 1972 when Ivasiuk's music was triumphantly performed in Lviv by the VIA "Smerichka," one of Ivasiuk's professors at the Conservatory, the composer Anatolii Kos-Anatolskyi, did not take up Ivasiuk's invitation to the concert. Kos-Anatolskyi's absence, Lepsha argues, showed that the "the ruling clan (*pravliachyi klan*) of Lviv did not consider him a composer worthy of attention."[64]

A number of other individuals in Lviv, some of them in positions of power, were also quite hostile towards Ivasiuk. According to Lepsha, many musicians, composers, and bureaucrats in the Ministry of Culture resented Ivasiuk's success: "while his songs sounded (*lunaly*) triumphantly throughout the whole Soviet Union and were heard every day on radio and television, people were envious of him (*zazdryly*): poorly-educated bureaucrats and talentless people (*nezdary*) hated his talent."[65] In the years after Ivasiuk's death, some observers also claimed that the authorities tried to smear the composer as a "bourgeois Ukrainian nationalist."[66]

After his arrival in Lviv, Ivasiuk worked on new compositions while also continuing his medical and musical education. He composed songs in collaboration with the poets Rostyslav Bratun, Roman Kudlyk, Iurii Rybchynskyi, Dmytro Pavlychko, Anatolii Drahomyretskyi and others. The composer also began work, in collaboration with Serhii Danchenko, on music for a stage production based on the prominent Ukrainian writer Oles Honchar's Second World War novel trilogy *Praporonostsi*.[67]

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[64] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 29.
[65] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 29.
[66] Taras Unhurian, *Monoloh pered oblychchiam brata* (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi tsentr "Prosvita," 2003), 16.
[67] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 30.

While Ivasiuk would win additional awards and recognition from other artists during the mid-1970s, he also suffered a series of devastating personal and artistic setbacks. In 1974, Ivasiuk's music was introduced to audiences outside the USSR when Sofiia Rotaru performed the composer's song "Vodohrai" to great acclaim at the "Sopot-74" festival in Poland.[68] As a result, Ivasiuk's music was being performed by ensembles in Bulgaria, Slovakia and even Japan by 1976.[69] In 1975, Ivasiuk's music for *Praporonostsi* won first prize in another all-Union song contest, this one dedicated to music composed for theatre productions in honour of the thirtieth anniversary of Soviet Victory in the "Great Patriotic War." *Praporonostsi* debuted in March 1975, and the play was well-received by audiences. Oles Honchar expressed his pleasure with the music Ivasiuk had composed for the theatre production of his novel, calling the music a "symphonic requiem for the memory of the Soviet soldier."[70]

Some members of the Soviet regime did not share Honchar's enthusiasm for Ivasiuk's work, however. When the creators of the musical *Praporonostsi* were awarded the Taras Shevchenko State Prize, Soviet Ukraine's highest honour for cultural achievement, Ivasiuk's name was not present on the list of recipients. Lepsha argues that Ivasiuk's name must have been removed from the list of honourees by the authorities, although it is unknown at what stage and by whom this was done, and that this can only have been a terrible blow to Ivasiuk's confidence.[71]

In 1974, Ivasiuk began studying at the Composition Faculty of the Lviv Conservatory of Music. Because he was working as a doctor and composing the music for *Praporonostsi* at the same time, Ivasiuk missed many classes and was forced to repeat his first year of studies.

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[68] "Osnovni daty," 209.
[69] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 34.
[70] "Osnovni daty," 209; Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 31.
[71] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 32.

Then, because he did not attend classes at the conservatory while repeating his first year, he was expelled from the Conservatory in July 1976.[72]

Following his expulsion from the conservatory, Ivasiuk sought psychiatric treatment and was eventually admitted to a psychiatric hospital at his own request. While the hospital stay, as well as Ivasiuk's complaints of mental illness at the time, would be used as proof of Ivasiuk's suicidal nature after his death, Lepsha claims that Ivasiuk's actions in seeking psychiatric treatment were simply an old student trick. Ivasiuk intended to use his feigned mental illness and hospital stay as an excuse to account for his absence from classes, allowing him to secure readmission to the Conservatory. Whatever Ivasiuk's true motivations for seeking psychiatric treatment, he was readmitted to the Conservatory in September 1977.[73]

Despite the challenges Ivasiuk faced during his time in Lviv, he was quite productive during the last seven years of his life (1972-79). According to his father, Ivasiuk composed over seventy songs during this period, as well as several instrumental works. In the difficult year 1977, Ivasiuk achieved another milestone when the record "The Songs of Volodymyr Ivasiuk sung by Sofiia Rotaru" was released by the Soviet state record label Melodiia.[74]

Ivasiuk apparently experienced further difficulties during the first few months of 1979, shortly before his death. According to Ivan Lepsha, there were ominous signs that something unfortunate would happen to Volodymyr Ivasiuk in the first few months of 1979. When Ivasiuk travelled to Khmelnytskyi in April 1979 to serve on the jury of a song competition "unexpected and inexplicable things" apparently began to happen to the composer. Lepsha cites unconfirmed rumours that Ivasiuk received threatening telephone calls around this time. Depending on the version of the rumour, the callers tried to dissuade Ivasiuk from composing music for the Ukrainian poet Maksym Rylskyi's poem "Chuttia iedynoi rodyny"; ordered the composer not to write music for Russian-language texts; or

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[72] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 33.
[73] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 34-39
[74] Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," 31.

made demands for a share of Ivasiuk's honoraria.[75] While there may be no truth to these particular rumours of harassment, Lepsha claims that Ivasiuk did have an unpleasant encounter with the KGB around this time. The composer had complained to Lepsha several months earlier that the KGB was harassing him because of a dispute over royalties from the sale of recordings of Ivasiuk's music in Canada and the United States. Apparently the KGB wanted Ivasiuk to travel to the West, accept the proceeds from these recordings, and donate the money to the Peace Fund (*Fond myru*), while Ivasiuk insisted that if he received the royalties he would donate them towards the construction of a music school in Chernivtsi.[76]

On April 24, 1979, when he returned from Khmelnytskyi, another unpleasant experience may have caused Ivasiuk further distress. The nominees of the Komsomol's Mykola Ostrovskyi Prize, for which Ivasiuk had applied, were published in a newspaper the same day. Despite the fact that Ivasiuk had been nominated for the prize by the Lviv oblast Komsomol and his nomination was endorsed by several cultural organizations, his name was not on the published list of nominees.[77] In later years, Mykhailo Ivasiuk suggested that an official at the Lviv oblast level had intentionally sabotaged Ivasiuk's application for the prize.[78] For reasons which remain unknown but may have been a result of Ivasiuk's frustration at once again being denied recognition of his achievements by the state, he left his apartment early on April 25 and never returned.[79]

Death and Aftermath

Ivasiuk's body was found May 11, hanging from a tree in a wooded section of Briukhovychi, a town near Lviv. The official investigation into Ivasiuk's death determined that he had committed suicide, using the evidence of the composer's time under psychiatric

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[75] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 50.
[76] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 50, 51.
[77] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 51.
[78] Myroslav Lazaruk, "Cherpav natkhnennia z ridnykh dzherel," *Molod Ukrainy*, April 9, 1988.
[79] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 54.

care as evidence of his suicidal tendencies.[80] Many individuals, both at the time of Ivasiuk's death and later, refused to accept the official explanation for the composer's death. The sentiment that Ivasiuk had been murdered, perhaps by the KGB, was widespread in Lviv.[81]

Accounts of Ivasiuk's death and its aftermath from the Ukrainian diaspora, while perhaps of questionable reliability, reflect the atmosphere of horror and suspicion which surrounded his death. One account from the Ukrainian-American journal *Smoloskyp* described Ivasiuk's body as being severely mutilated and blamed the KGB for murdering the composer.:

> The eyes had been plucked out, the fingers were broken, the body had branches of the kalyna tree shoved into it (this red-berried tree ironically has been a symbol through the centuries of the Ukrainian spirit), and the entire torso was covered with lacerations and bruises.[82]

The article by A. A. Zwarun in *Smoloskyp* placed the blame for Ivasiuk's death on the KGB, and portrayed Ivasiuk as an uncompromising Ukrainian patriot who died because of his principled support of Ukrainian culture and his influence on Ukrainian youth. According to Zwarun's article, Ivasiuk did not enter song competitions because he would have had to write songs in Russian: the composer "did not want to compromise his convictions about music or his heritage." Ivasiuk's music "became an element for the preservation of Ukrainian consciousness simply because it was in the Ukrainian language. This fact alone must have been such a threat to the Soviet authorities that Ivasyuk was not only eliminated, but he was eliminated in a way that would be a warning to others."[83] Another article in the same issue of *Smoloskyp* characterized Ivasiuk as yet another in a group of Ukrainian cultural figures and intellectuals who had died in suspicious circumstances, including Alla Horska, Volodymy Osadchyi and Ivan Vytenko. These incidents were

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[80] Lepsha, "Zhyttia i smert," 55-7.
[81] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 178.
[82] A. A. Zwarun, "The Day the Music Died," *Smoloskyp* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1979): 1.
[83] Zwarun, "Day the Music Died," 6.

"apparently…aimed at intimidating young, well-known Ukrainian artists and intellectuals." Because, according to *Smoloskyp*, Ivasiuk had been under surveillance by the KGB and "had been threatened with psychiatric prison, "KGB involvement in his murder can be assumed."[84]

Ivan Lepsha noted in later years that several contradictory rumours about the cause and perpetrators of Ivasiuk's death circulated in 1979. One rumour was that Ivasiuk had been murdered by Ukrainian nationalists because he had been composing music for the fortieth anniversary of the "reunification" of western Ukraine with eastern Ukraine. Another rumour claimed that Ivasiuk had been killed by representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church (*tserkovnyky*) because he had written works for the underground Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. A third rumour was that the KGB and bureaucrats from the Ministry of Culture had been responsible for Ivasiuk's death because Ivasiuk's success had represented the rebirth of the Ukrainian nation at a time when the Soviet regime was working to create a single "Soviet people."[85] These rumours illustrate the ideologically amorphous nature of Ivasiuk. It was possible to believe, depending on one's perspective, that Ivasiuk had been killed for having Ukrainian nationalist sympathies, or, on the other hand, that he had been killed by Ukrainian nationalists for being too sympathetic towards the regime.

Ivasiuk's relationship to the regime was in fact ambiguous during his life. On one hand, he was not engaged in open dissent, but the fact that the composer was very popular and not completely integrated with official Soviet culture meant that he may have been viewed with some suspicion by the regime. According to Mykola Ryabchuk, "he was not fully…engaged, incorporated into the system. As far as I know, he never confronted it openly, but at the same time it was obvious that he was not there."[86]

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[84] Lesya Verba, "Suspicious Deaths Point to KGB Involvement." *Smoloskyp* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1979): 9.
[85] Ivan Lepsha, "Sviato bez posviaty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, July 27, 1991.
[86] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.

The widespread (at least in Lviv) interpretation of Ivasiuk's death as a murder committed by the Soviet regime would become an important element in the myth of Ivasiuk as a martyr which began to develop immediately after his death. When a widespread public examination of Ivasiuk's significance began during the perestroika era, his death would also become an important element of the dominant narrative.

Public Reaction in Lviv to Ivasiuk's Death

Whatever the true circumstances of Ivasiuk's death, there was widespread suspicion in Lviv that the composer's death was the result of foul play. The death in suspicious circumstances of Ivasiuk, a prominent Ukrainian who wrote almost exclusively Ukrainian-language songs, also embodied the concerns of many Lvivites that Ukrainian culture was suffering discrimination at the expense of Russian culture, even in primarily Ukrainian-speaking Lviv.[87]

As a result, more than ten thousand people attended Ivasiuk's funeral at the Lychakiv cemetery in Lviv, and the funeral was also a political protest, albeit of a subdued nature. "Local writers who had collaborated with Ivasiuk presented poems and eulogies strongly hinting that Ivasiuk had been stolen from Ukrainians."[88] The concept that Ivasiuk had been stolen from Ukrainians would be repeated frequently in the discourse over Ivasiuk of the perestroika era. The authorities strongly discouraged Lvivites from attending the funeral. Students who attended were threatened with expulsion, and members of the security services photographed the mourners openly so that their presence would intimidate those present.[89]

An article in a Ukrainian-Canadian journal from 1979 also described the commemorative activities which took place immediately after the composer's death and the feelings of anger at the regime experienced by many people in Lviv at the time. The account

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[87] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 177, 178.
[88] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 178.
[89] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.

in the journal *Diialoh* reported that demonstrations at Ivasiuk's grave continued for three weeks after his death and that Ivasiuk's grave attracted many visitors from western Ukraine and also from Kyiv and other cities. Another phenomenon which followed Ivasiuk's death was the writing and distribution of poems about the composer. Apparently these poems were written by university students and even high school students, and the poems were read publicly and posted on walls and doors. The journal reported that the fundamental message of these writings and protests was: " 'You won't hang us all, you won't kill (*perebiete*) us all!' You will pay for your deeds!'"[90]

A gathering on Ivasiuk's grave a few months after his death, on the religious feast of the Sunday of the Trinity, June 12, 1979 (a holiday also known as *Zeleni sviata* when Ukrainians traditionally visited graves), alarmed the authorities and led to repressive actions on their part. Vasyl and Petro Sichko, a father and son who had both been punished in the past for "nationalist" activity, organized a memorial service for the composer on his grave. The event was a more vocal and explicitly nationalistic commemoration of Ivasiuk than the funeral had been:

> The Sichkos put "anti-Soviet" writings on Ivasiuk's grave and read aloud some poems they had composed in his memory. Both Sichkos directly accused the Soviet regime of having killed Ivasiuk. The meeting ended with "Glory to Ukraine!," a slogan of greeting and farewell used by the OUN [Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, a militant Ukrainian nationalist organization of the mid-twentieth century] and later the UPA [the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the guerilla army of the OUN]. Among those present at what the local Communist Youth newspaper called a "nationalist Sabbath" was the widow of the UPA's late commander, Roman Shukhevych.[91]

Both the Sichkos were sentenced to prison for their part in this "nationalist Sabbath," and as a result of the controversy resulting from the event the local authorities commenced a crackdown on "what they saw as 'nationalist' activity among Ivasiuk's mourners.'" The Sichkos and others were condemned by the local Komsomol newspaper for misappropriating

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[90] "Khronika podii: Ukraina," *Diialoh*, 1979, no. 2, 52, 53.
[91] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 179.

Ivasiuk's memory for their own subversive purposes. Rostyslav Bratun, who was head of the Writers' Union of Ukraine and one of the prominent speakers at the composer's funeral, was prohibited from serving another term as head of the Writers' Union in late 1979. A student who had visited Ivasiuk's grave was also expelled from both the Komsomol and the university in 1980.[92] The original version of the television film "Chervona Ruta" was also destroyed at the Lviv television studios after Ivasiuk's death, apparently under orders from high-level officials.[93]

According to Risch, the political protest which followed Ivasiuk's death, and the official crackdown which ensued, "show that pop culture had gone nationalist in L'viv. Nationhood, combined with pop, could rally the masses against the Soviet state."[94] Ivasiuk's legacy had political significance to many people in Lviv immediately after his death and even during his life. It seems less likely that this was the case in other regions of Ukraine where the population was less nationally conscious.

According to Mykola Ryabchuk, who was living in Lviv at the time, Ivasiuk (who was already a pop culture icon because of the success of his music) took on additional symbolic importance after his death. The outlook for Ukrainian language and culture and political freedom was so bleak during the 1970s and early 1980s that a "symbol of resistance" such as Ivasiuk was useful for keeping up the spirits of disheartened Lvivites who probably never imagined that political reform was on the horizon: "People need a sort of icon to be praised…especially if you are cornered by the authorities." Although at first some people had doubts about whether Ivasiuk had in fact been murdered by the authorities, they preferred to view Ivasiuk as a martyr because of the inspirational value of his martyrdom. Ivasiuk's

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[92] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 180.
[93] Unhurian, *Monoloh pered oblychchiam brata*, 16.
[94] Risch, "Island of Freedom," 180.

significance as a symbol was based on his supposed martyrdom and on his achievements as a talented composer of Ukrainian songs which became popular throughout the Soviet Union.[95]

Commemorations of Ivasiuk from 1979-86 and the Political Consequences of His Death

Commemorations of Ivasiuk in Lviv were a regular occurrence even after the Sichkos' "nationalist Sabbath" brought a harsh reaction from the local authorities. Commemorative activities continued throughout the 1980s, although it would not be until 1987 that Ivasiuk's legacy began to be commemorated and discussed openly and critically in the media. The composer's grave was often covered in flowers in the years that followed, and the grave was a revered landmark for Lvivites during the early 1980s.[96] During the early and mid-1980s, visitors to Lviv were frequently brought to the grave by local residents.[97]

After the composer's death, his father, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, converted his son's room in Chernivtsi into a museum of sorts, and musicians, artists and others made the pilgrimage the family's apartment in Chernivtsi in the years after 1979.[98] In addition to visiting Ivasiuk's grave and leaving flowers there, as described above, *panakhydy* (prayer services) began to be held near the grave on the anniversary of Ivasiuk's death at some point during the 1980s.[99]

The Soviet authorities actively discouraged commemorations of Ivasiuk after his death and, according to some sources, also attempted to discredit the composer and suppress his music. The composer's father was prohibited by the authorities from erecting a gravestone, and someone doused the flowers on the grave with gasoline and set them alight during the summer of 1979.[100] A number of observers alleged during the 1980s that certain bureaucrats in the Ministry of Culture conducted a campaign to discredit Ivasiuk, both during

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[95] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.
[96] Information provided by Andriy Nahachewsky, November 1, 2007.
[97] Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk, October 23, 2007.
[98] Anton Zhadan, "Vozvrashchenie Ivasiuka," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, November 11, 1988.
[99] P. Romaniuk, "Lito piznikh zhorzhyn," *Kultura i zhyttia*, September 17, 1989.
[100] Anton Zhadan, "Kto muzyki ne nosit sam v sebe," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, November 11, 1988.

his life and after his death. They also worked to suppress the performance of Ivasiuk's music. Ivasiuk's works disappeared from the repertoire of most musicians.[101] As will be discussed below, some observers later alleged that there had been no sustained effort to suppress Ivasiuk's music after his death.

It was most notable that Sofiia Rotaru, the most prominent performer of the composer's work (and an artist who had achieved much of her success through performing Ivasiuk's songs), stopped performing Ivasiuk's compositions. According to Lepsha, she did this under the influence of "unhealthy external factors" (presumably, under official pressure or out of a pragmatic desire to preserve her career).[102] Nonetheless, Rotaru did write a foreword to a collection of Ivasiuk's music which was published in 1983, suggesting that any association with Ivasiuk was not politically fatal even during the early 1980s.[103]

One of the earliest recorded commemorations of the *perestroika* era took place in 1986. In that year, the journal *Zhovten* reported that a "literary-artistic evening" dedicated to the memory of Volodymyr Ivasiuk was held at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Chernivtsi. The article did not record the names of those who were present, perhaps because participation in such an event could lead to a negative reaction from the authorities.[104] Ivasiuk's father, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, was almost certainly involved in this commemoration, as he lived in Chernivtsi and was associated with the university.

Efforts to "Rehabilitate" Ivasiuk, 1987-88

The process of re-establishing Volodymyr Ivasiuk's reputation after the posthumous suppression and neglect of his work and legacy (whether or not the efforts to "silence" the

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[101] Ivan Lepsha, "Ioho pisnia pomizh nas," *Kultura i zhyttia* March 26, 1989; Mykola Ruban, "Posiiana nym ruta," *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, December 1989, 35, 36.
[102] Lepsha, "Ioho pisnia pomizh nas."
[103] Sofiia Rotaru, "Vesnianyi parus ridnoi pisni," foreword to *Pisni. V. Ivasiuk.*, ed. H. Ia. Hembera (Kyiv: Muzychna Ukraina, 1983).
[104] "Khronika tvorchykh budniv. Literaturni vechory, zustrichi," *Zhovten*, August 1986, no. 8:132.

composer were in fact as extensive as his supporters claimed) began in 1987, when articles in the official press brought critical discussion of Ivasiuk to the public sphere and inspired support for (and debate over) a proposed music festival in the composer's honour. As a result, Ivasiuk received a significant degree of attention in the press in 1988. The campaign to rehabilitate Ivasiuk's reputation and honour the composer were successful to some degree in 1988--the composer received official honours from the Komsomol and it seems that the taboos on his name and music were lifted to some degree. Although in 1987 Ivasiuk may still have been viewed with suspicion by elements of the regime, efforts to improve his reputation and honour him through an official Komsomol award and preparations for a music festival were successful in 1988.

Perestroika and the Politics of Culture in Ukraine, 1987-88

The prominent efforts to "rehabilitate" and honour Volodymyr Ivasiuk which took place in 1987 and 1988 occurred in the context of growing political activism and cultural revival in the Ukrainian SSR. Around this time, independent cultural and political organizations began to emerge and multiply, inspired by the political reforms introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev. As noted earlier, the initial steps towards the revival of an independent Ukrainian civic culture had been spearheaded by the Writers' Union. The rethinking of history, the rehabilitation of forgotten or suppressed cultural figures, and debate over the place of Ukrainian language and culture were important elements of the political and cultural transformation which tentatively began in Ukraine around this time and which would accelerate in the years that followed.

Some of the "informal" groups focused their attention on environmental issues, the preservation of "the Ukrainian cultural and historical heritage," and peace and disarmament. While many of the "informal" organizations appeared to be focused on culture rather than politics at first, some of them were in fact aiming for broader political change. As Nahaylo

writes, "it soon became apparent that some of them represented not so much a 'counterculture' as a 'counter-ideology.'"[105] The leadership of the banned Greek Catholic Church also emerged from underground and began working towards the legalization of the Church. In 1987, political prisoners who had recently been released by the Gorbachev regime also made an effort to "revive independent public life."[106]

Opposition leaders such as Viacheslav Chornovil called on the Soviet regime to reexamine the nationalities question, expanding the rights of the titular nationalities in the national republics and revitalizing the state of their native languages. Chornovil also suggested that "the process of filling in the blank pages of Ukrainian history had essentially not even begun yet."[107]

In 1987, Tovarystvo Leva (the Lion Society) formed in Lviv. It was to occupy itself largely with the politics of culture and everyday life—for example, cleaning up graves in the Lychakiv cemetery and preserving Ukrainian traditions. The Ukrainian Cultorological Club, formed in Kyiv by former political prisoners, was a "discussion group for nationally minded citizens" which directed its attention to the "blank spots" in history and the preservation of monuments.[108]

In Lviv, informal organizations progressed quickly from activism which focused on narrower issues such as culture or the environment to more radical calls for serious political change. By the summer of 1988, when large protest meetings were held in Lviv and the "Democratic Front to Promote Restructuring" (*Rukh*) was founded, the demands of the more radical opposition leaders "were no longer limited to cultural matters, but were clearly political in nature."[109] Nonetheless, Rukh argued that it was necessary to rethink the official

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[105] Bohdan Nahaylo, *The Ukrainian Resurgence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 84.
[106] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 84-6, 89.
[107] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 91.
[108] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 93.
[109] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 135, 139.

version of history in order to achieve Ukrainian independence. The interpretation of history was closely tied to political power. As Catherine Wanner writes:

> Rukh articulated its rationale for an independent state in terms of a nationalist historiography. To reform the present system involved engaging, if not discrediting the past. The Soviet state had always made a steadfast and unwavering commitment to control historical representation and public discourse about historical events. Rukh consistently sought to challenge official Soviet interpretations of Ukrainian history and to replace them with national myths and symbols in an effort to generate national consciousness and support for an independent Ukrainian state.[110]

During the perestroika period, Ukrainians and citizens of other Soviet republics were suddenly exposed to a large number of new interpretations of the past. Professional historians, who were controlled by the state, no longer had a monopoly on interpreting history; individuals now had greater freedom to reinterpret the public discourse on history. According to Wanner, "[h]istory was reclaimed for oneself and for one's cultural groups and was couched in terms of an endless litany of victimization."[111]

Thus the revival of Ivasiuk's reputation took place at a time when many Ukrainians were reexamining the official version of history and the place of Ukrainian culture, as well as attempting to revitalize their language and culture and rehabilitate figures who had been punished and disgraced by the regime in the past. The changing political climate meant that there was greater freedom to raise questions about Ivasiuk in the press and that the public was also quite receptive to discussions of restoring Ivasiuk's proper place in history.

"To ie chystaia voda": Rehabilitation Begins

The process of revitalizing Volodymyr Ivasiuk's reputation in the official media apparently began in earnest in 1987, although the composer's father, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, had been working towards the same goal in previous years as well. In June of 1987, a brief

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[110] Catherine Wanner, *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 35.
[111] Wanner, *Burden of Dreams*, 37.

reminiscence of the composer written by the elder Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," was published in the journal *Sotsialistychna kultura*. The article included Mykhailo Ivasiuk's memories of particular milestones in the younger Ivasiuk's life and career and described Volodymyr's character, as well as his desire to be the "Ukrainian Schubert."[112]

In 1986, Mykhailo Ivasiuk had brought a lengthy reminiscence of his son's life, "Monoloh pered oblychchiam syna," to the Chernivtsi oblast newspaper *Molodyi bukovynets*. The editor of the newspaper, Bohdan Zahaiskyi, proposed the publication of Mykhailo Ivasiuk's work, and it was serialized in the newspaper over several months from August to October 1987. According to Zahaiskyi, the article was published despite pressure from the oblast Party committee (*obkom*) and other official bodies.[113]

In 1988, the same reminiscence was published in a journal of the Writers' Union of Ukraine, *Zhovten*.[114] It is noteworthy that neither the lengthy article in *Zhovten* nor the earlier reminiscence in *Sotsialistychna kultura* mentioned the circumstances of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's death or its aftermath. This was no doubt a painful topic for the elder Ivasiuk, but the omission is also likely to have been a result of the political controversy which had surrounded Ivasiuk's death and commemoration. Mykhailo Ivasiuk was also quoted in a number of articles on Volodymyr Ivasiuk published in 1988 and 1989.[115] Volodymyr Ivasiuk's father no doubt made a significant contribution toward re-establishing the composer's legitimacy, by virtue of Mykhailo Ivasiuk's position as a grieving father and the tragic circumstances of his son's death.

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[112] Mykhailo Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered pamiattiu syna," *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, June 1987, 30, 31.
[113] Unhurian, *Monoloh pered oblychchiam brata*, 46, 47; Paraskoviia Nechaieva, ed., *Pisnia bude pomizh nas: Bibliohrafichnyi pokazchyk*. (Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2004), 40.
[114] Mykhailo Ivasiuk, "Monoloh pered oblychchiam syna," *Zhovten*, September 1988, no. 9:19-60; *Zhovten*, October 1988, no. 10:18-63. This work was also published in several issues of the periodical *Barvystok*.
[115] Anton Zhadan, "Vozvrashchenie Ivasiuka," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, November 11, 1988; Myroslav Lazaruk, "Cherpav natkhnennia z ridnykh dzherel," *Molod Ukrainy*, April 9, 1988; K. Kindras, "Khto znaide chervonu rutu?," *Radianska Ukraina*, September 19, 1989.

In December 1987, Ivan Lepsha, a journalist who covered music and who had known Ivasiuk, published an article entitled "To ie chystaia voda" ("That is pure water," a line from Ivasiuk's "Chervona Ruta"), in *Molod Ukrainy*, the Ukrainian-language republican Komsomol newspaper. Lepsha argued that "the name and creative accomplishments (*dorobok*) of Volodymyr Ivasiuk should be returned to the youth of Ukraine" and further, that a music festival should be established in Ivasiuk's name.[116] Lepsha's call for a festival spurred additional articles in support of this idea, as well as significant support from individuals throughout Ukraine (as expressed through letters to the editors of newspapers).[117]

The interest in and debate over a potential Chervona Ruta festival inspired Rostyslav Bratun, a poet and former head of the Writers' Union who collaborated with Ivasiuk during the performer's life and spoke at the composer's funeral, to address the singer's legacy and the proposal for a festival in an article published in *Molod Ukrainy*. Bratun noted that a "vacuum of silence, whispers and slanders (*naklepy*)" had formed around Ivasiuk's name, which had been created by certain bureaucrats in the ministry of culture. For reasons which Bratun could not explain, an "incomprehensible attitude" towards Ivasiuk persisted to the present. The poet pointed out that there was no memorial on the composer's grave and asked "[w]hat civilized people (*narod*) honours its singers in this manner?" Bratun asked where a wreath for Ivasiuk could be placed if the proposed Chervona Ruta festival was to take place in Lviv; although Ivasiuk's grave was always covered in flowers and frequently visited, there was only a wooden post as a marker. For Bratun, the fate of the memory of Ivasiuk after 1979 reflected the tendency of Ukrainians to not honour their own culture. He argued that "[o]ne must honour one's singers—one must honour oneself" and urged his readers not to "trample the spiritual beauty which you have."[118]

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[116] Ivan Lepsha, "Kvitny slavoiu, 'Chervona Ruto!,'" *Suchasnist*, February 1990, no. 2:33. The original article from *Molod Ukrainy* has not been located.
[117] Lepsha, "Kvitny slavoiu," 33.
[118] Rostyslav Bratun, "Ne topchit, ne topchit konvalii," *Molod Ukrainy*, March 26, 1988.

In the same article, Bratun made concrete suggestions for rectifying what he saw as a sad situation—the lack of proper commemoration of the composer. He proposed that funds be gathered for the erection of a proper grave marker for Ivasiuk and that the Union of Composers of Ukraine make Ivasiuk a posthumous member. Bratun also insisted that Ivasiuk's songs must be performed at the Chervona Ruta festival. The poet observed as well that the debate over Ivasiuk, Ukrainian *estradna pisnia*, and the proposed festival, which had been started by *Molod Ukrainy*, was having a positive effect. He was thankful that the newspaper was "returning the composer his good name" and initiating the "essential" music festival.[119]

Stella Hryniuk, a Canadian academic who knew Bratun well during the late 1980s and 1990s, suggested that Bratun underwent an ideological transformation following the death of Ivasiuk. While Bratun was a loyal Soviet subject early in his life, Hryniuk claims that Ivasiuk's death served as a "wakeup call" to the poet, convincing him that he could no longer continue simply acting in a manner that was expedient for his career. Bratun organized Ivasiuk's funeral, for which he was punished, and became an activist for cultural and political change to the degree that by 1987 he was "persona non grata" to the authorities. Bratun's association with Ivasiuk also apparently gave him great credibility with young people in the years after the composer's death.[120]

Literaturna Ukraina and the Shevchenko Prize

In addition to the calls for a music festival in Ivasiuk's honour and other forms of recognition which arose in the pages of *Molod Ukrainy*, in late 1987 and 1988 several individuals began calling for Ivasiuk to receive the T. H. Shevchenko State Prize, the highest cultural honour of the Ukrainian SSR. In the fall of 1987, Stanislav Telniuk, writing in the

[119] Bratun, "Ne topchit, ne topchit konvalii."
[120] Interview with Stella Hryniuk, February 21, 2008.

newspaper of the Writers' Union of Ukraine, *Literaturna Ukraina*, called for the recognition of several cultural figures who had received critical praise but had never received the Shevchenko prize. In at least some cases, these individuals had been viewed with suspicion by the regime or had their work suppressed. Telniuk criticized Ukrainians for not honouring some of their most talented cultural figures and advocated the posthumous award of the Shevchenko prize to these individuals, Volodymyr Ivasiuk among them. He asked: "[d]o we not feel internal shame (*vnutrishnyi sorom*) at the fact that to this day [the poet] Vasyl Mysyk, [the writer] Ivan Senchenko, Vasyl Symonenko, Hryhir Tiutiunnyk [the latter two were writers whose work was suppressed by the state], and the composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk have not been awarded the Shevchenko Prize?" Telniuk also pointed out that Vladimir Vysotskii had been awarded the State Prize of the USSR many years after his death. In this respect, the example of the Ukrainians' "Russian brothers" was worth emulating.[121]

When *Literaturna Ukraina,* suggested to its readers in the winter of 1988 that they choose their preferred recipients of the Shevchenko State Prize, the editors of the newspaper intended that readers would make their selections from among the individuals who had already been nominated for the prize. The response from *Literaturna Ukraina*'s readers surprised the newspaper's editors for two reasons. First, about a third of the letters submitted by readers did not confine their choices to the official nominees, instead proposing their own recipients for the Shevchenko Prize. Volodymyr Ivasiuk was among those individuals nominated for the prize by readers. For example, a woman from Chernivtsi suggested that Ivasiuk be awarded the Shevchenko prize, along with Hryhir Tiutiunnyk and Vasyl Symonenko. A graduate student from Kyiv also submitted his own candidates, Ivasiuk among them.[122]

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[121] Stanislav Telniuk, "Vchimosia povazhaty fakty," *Literaturna Ukraina*, September 3, 1987.
[122] Introduction to "Pisnia bude pomizh nas," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.

The editors of *Literaturna Ukraina* were further astonished that several letters made reference to the readers' desire to see the "rehabilitation" of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. This was surprising to the editors because, in the view of *Literaturna Ukraina*, Ivasiuk had never been repressed by the Soviet State in the first place: "…during his life [Ivasiuk] did not suffer repression or persecution and was not even tried or placed under investigation (*slidstvo*). What rehabilitation are [the readers] talking about? Moreover, Ivasiuk's songs are often heard on the radio."[123]

The letters submitted to *Literaturna Ukraina* on the topic of the Shevchenko Prize in 1988 and the newspaper's response illustrate two important elements of popular opinion of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. First, while the specific number of readers who nominated Ivasiuk for the prize is unknown, the fact that the two readers mentioned by the newspaper's editors proposed Ivasiuk as a recipient of Soviet Ukraine's highest cultural honour reflects the reverence many people felt for Ivasiuk. The number of readers who mentioned Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation" demonstrates that a myth of Ivasiuk as a quasi-dissident had already formed among some Ukrainians even by early 1988. Based on the evidence of popular sentiment from around the time of the composer's death, this myth was probably strongest in Lviv.

Literaturna Ukraina's response to its readers' claims that Ivasiuk required "rehabilitation" is also an early example of a debate that would resurface in the newspaper *Kultura i zhyttia* in late 1991. By contrast with the popular narrative of Ivasiuk as a martyr who had suffered at the hands of the Soviet regime during his life and whose work had been officially silenced after the composer's death, as expressed in some letters sent to *Literaturna Ukraina* in 1988 and in other publications during the perestroika period, the newspaper pointed out the facts of the situation as it saw them—Ivasiuk had not suffered overt repression during his life and his music had not been silenced after his death. The efforts of *Literaturna Ukraina*'s editors to cast doubt on the portrayal of Ivasiuk as a near-dissident and

[123] Introduction to "Pisnia bude pomizh nas," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.

martyr apparently had little effect, as this kind of critical examination of the facts appears very rarely in the media coverage of Ivasiuk's legacy during the perestroika period.

It is unlikely that the skepticism of *Literaturna Ukraina* about the need for Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation" was the result of censorship because of the record of activism exhibited by the Writers' Union during the perestroika years and the fact that *Literaturna Ukraina* was one of the publications where controversial cultural and political issues could be discussed most freely in 1987 and 1988. After the 1986 Chornobyl disaster, members of the Writers' Union were among the first individuals to express open criticism of the Soviet regime. They also began a campaign to revitalize the state of Ukrainian language and culture.[124] *Literaturna Ukraina* published a number of articles in 1987 and 1988 which were quite critical of the status quo in Ukraine and the "blank spots" in Ukrainian history. For example, in September 1987 the newspaper began publishing a series called "Pages of a Forgotten Heritage," which aimed to inform readers about "aspects of Ukraine's submerged history and culture." The series addressed the writer Mykola Khvylovyi and other cultural figures who were repressed by the Stalinist regime during the 1920s and 1930s.[125]

In an effort to educate its readers (both those who were familiar with the composer's work during his life and younger readers who were not), *Literaturna Ukraina* published several reminiscences and critical evaluations of Ivasiuk in August 1988. The authors included Rostyslav Bratun; the well-known singers Vasyl Zinkevych and Sofiia Rotaru, who achieved great success performing Ivasiuk's music; the composer Ievhen Stankovych; and the music scholar Iurii Shcherytsia.[126] By comparison with some of the more politicized articles on Ivasiuk which appeared in later years, most of these brief accounts of the composer's life

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[124] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 61-67.
[125] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 99.
[126] Articles published under the heading "Pisnia bude pomizh nas," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.

and music were quite restrained in tone and focused on Ivasiuk's musical talent and personal qualities.

Rostyslav Bratun's recollection of Ivasiuk, published in *Literaturna Ukraina* under the title "Ne zovsim lirychna elehiia" ("A not-quite lyrical elegy"), had the sharpest tone. Bratun took a different view of Ivasiuk's relationship with the regime than the editors of *Literaturna Ukraina*. The poet expressed many of the same views in *Literaturna Ukraina* as he had in his article in *Molod Ukrainy* from earlier in 1988. He claimed that the work of Ivasiuk had been suppressed by the Soviet regime after the composer's death and expressed the hope that the composer, who was never granted membership of the Union of Composers of Ukraine, would be made a posthumous member so that the true measure of his talent could finally be recognized. Unfortunately, Bratun complained, composers and musicians had been silent on this topic.[127]

The poet also implied that many people had been afraid to speak about Ivasiuk after his death, claiming that Ukrainians were only now "timidly" beginning to speak about the composer. Bratun argued that certain bureaucrats from the Ministry of Culture and composers without talent (*muzychni grafomany*) orchestrated a smear campaign against Ivasiuk after his death because they resented the composer's talent. The poet mentioned cases of performance of the composer's work being banned during the "period of stagnation" and also noted the scarcity of audio and video recordings of Ivasiuk's music. To underline his claims that Ivasiuk's work had been suppressed in recent years, Bratun asked "[c]an you remember a radio or television concert consisting solely of [Ivasiuk's] works, let alone a concert of Ivasiuk's compositions (*tematychnyi vechir*) in a concert hall?"[128]

The other recollections of the composer published by *Literaturna Ukraina* in August 1988 focused largely on Ivasiuk's music and popularity rather than on his relationship with

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[127] Rostyslav Bratun, "Ne zovsim lirychna elehiia," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.
[128] Bratun, "Ne zovsim lirychna elehiia."

the regime. Several authors emphasized Ivasiuk's pan-Soviet appeal or otherwise portrayed him as not unfriendly towards the regime. Roman Kudlyk, a poet who had collaborated with Ivasiuk, noted that the composer had expressed interest in writing a musical with Kudlyk, the plot of which was to involve students helping collective farmers with the harvest.[129] Sofiia Rotaru emphasized the love of people from throughout the Soviet Union and abroad for the composer. Rotaru wrote: "Volodymyr Ivasiuk experienced (*zaznav*) great and sincere support (*prykhylnist*) from Soviet people (*radianski liudy).*"[130] Vasyl Zinkevych also emphasized Ivasiuk's popularity throughout the USSR and in other parts of the world, although he noted that Ivasiuk received little official recognition during his lifetime.[131]

Komsomolskoe znamia Examines Ivasiuk

The Russian-language newspaper of the Central Committee of the Komsomol of the Ukrainian SSR, *Komsomolskoe znamia*, also devoted coverage to Volodymyr Ivasiuk in November 1988. A caption on the cover of the newspaper noted that while the songs of Ivasiuk were known to all, not everyone knew the story of his death, implicitly pointing out that the memory of Ivasiuk had been suppressed by the Soviet regime.[132] Anton Zhadan, the author of the newspaper's article on Ivasiuk, mentioned Ivasiuk receiving the Ostrovskyi Prize and argued that Ivasiuk's "return to our life" was a step towards the revival (*vozrozhdenie*) of Ukrainian national culture. The article also included Mykhailo Ivasiuk's account of the regime's hostility towards his son both before and after his death, including the spreading of rumours that the younger Ivasiuk was a Ukrainian nationalist. The composer's father claimed that he had being trying to "stand up for (*otstoiuvat*) the good name" of his

[129] Roman Kudlyk, "Do rivnia vichnykh partytur," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.
[130] Sofiia Rotaru, "Vitrylo ridnoi melodii," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.
[131] Vasyl Zinkevych, "Zoria nezhasna," *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 11, 1988.
[132] "Kto muzyki ne nosit sam v sebe," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, November 11, 1988.

son" for ten years.[133] This article was evidently helpful in Mykhailo Ivasiuk's efforts to restore his son's reputation, as in 1989 he would thank *Komsomolskoe znamia* for publishing this article, which he praised as "truthful."[134]

The Posthumous Ostrovskyi Prize

Perhaps as a result of the efforts of Mykhailo Ivasiuk, Ivan Lepsha and others to keep the memory of Volodymyr Ivasiuk alive, the composer posthumously received the Komsomol's Mykola Ostrovskyi Prize in 1988 for his "substantial contribution to the development of Ukrainian *estradna pisnia* (stage music)," for his composition of music for a stage production of Oles Honchar's *Praporonostsi*, and for a number of instrumental works.[135] As noted earlier, Ivasiuk had applied for this award during the late 1970s, but a bureaucrat had ensured that the application did not reach its destination.[136]

To the many Ukrainians who believed that Volodymyr Ivasiuk had been unappreciated or even repressed during this life, and that his legacy had been forgotten and his music silenced after his death, the posthumous award of the Ostrovskyi Prize to Ivasiuk in 1988 was an important first step towards the correction of historical injustices. In 1987 and 1988, many individuals supported the idea of a music festival dedicated to the memory of Ivasiuk and called for other efforts to recognize the composer's achievements, such as erecting a proper gravestone on Ivasiuk's grave or awarding him the prestigious Shevchenko Prize or giving him posthumous membership in the Composers' Union. The editors of *Literaturna Ukraina* were critical of the popular pressure for Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation," questioning the implicit claims of many readers that Ivasiuk had been repressed and his music posthumously silenced.

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[133] Anton Zhadan, "Kto muzyki ne nosit sam v sebe," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, November 11, 1988.
[134] Iu. Kryl, " 'Muzyka—pamiat o nem,'" *Komsomolskoe znamia*, September 24, 1989.
[135] "Z kaleidoskopu podii. Khronika tvorchykh budniv. Nahorody—laureatam," *Zhovten*, January 1989, no. 1:133, 134.
[136] Myroslav Lazaruk, "Cherpav natkhnennia z ridnykh dzherel," *Molod Ukrainy*, April 9, 1988.

The efforts to "rehabilitate" and publicly commemorate Ivasiuk, which gained momentum in 1988, would achieve significant success in 1989 through the "Chervona Ruta" music festival and other commemorations. The public debate over Ivasiuk's significance would continue in 1989 as well, and the dominant narrative about the composer would change as well, becoming more explicitly politicized and nationalistic.

Chapter II: 1989—the Year of Ivasiuk

As a recording of Volodymyr Ivasiuk performing his most famous song, "Chervona ruta," sounded throughout the stadium in Chernivtsi, nearly everyone showed their respect by standing. Two militiamen remained seated during the performance, however, prompting a local journalist standing nearby to ask them, "Don't you respect Volodia?" (The diminutive form "Volodia" was commonly used by festival attendees and participants when referring to Ivasiuk). "We respect him," the two men replied, "but we're on duty."[1] This episode, like the Chervona Ruta music festival as a whole, showed the enormous reverence for Ivasiuk felt by many Ukrainians, even by some members of the security services.

Nineteen eighty-nine was a period of significant political and cultural upheaval in the Ukrainian SSR. This year also saw a great degree of media and popular interest devoted to Volodymyr Ivasiuk. The efforts of a few individuals to restore the late composer's reputation and honour his achievements, which had begun in 1988, achieved prominent success when the first Chervona Ruta festival was held in Ivasiuk's honour in 1989. The festival was the most visible and politically controversial event dedicated to the memory of the composer, but other commemorative events were also held in Ivasiuk's honour both before and during the festival.

Several different interpretations of the significance of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's legacy are evident in the public discourse over Ivasiuk which took place in 1989. Individuals who addressed Ivasiuk in the media and other forums sometimes differed over the proper commemoration of the composer or his true artistic or political significance. Volodymyr Ivasiuk was an ambiguous figure in 1989; his legacy could be invoked by both defenders and critics of the status quo in Soviet Ukraine. While he was frequently praised for his devotion to the Ukrainian nation, some accounts of Ivasiuk's importance also emphasized his loyalty to the Soviet regime and distanced him from "bourgeois nationalism." One observer of the

[1] V. Kuleba, "Navstrechu drug drugu," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, September 24, 1989.

growing cult of Ivasiuk expressed misgivings in late 1989 about Ivasiuk being elevated to the status of a national symbol. In his view, the bitter history of Ivasiuk's relationship with the regime (both in life and death) was being forgotten in the rush to transform him into a new national symbol.

Ivasiuk's prominence in popular discourse in 1989, as well as the political overtones which often accompanied his commemoration, reflected the unique conjuncture of the time. Ivasiuk was sometimes portrayed as a political symbol rather than as a purely artistic figure. This phenomenon reflected a particular moment in the rapidly changing political and cultural context of Ukraine during the last years of the Soviet era. The fact that so much political importance was attached to the commemoration of a composer whose ideological significance was ambiguous reflected a moment when nationally conscious Ukrainians had greater freedom to voice their criticism of the regime but were still somewhat reluctant to express radical political demands or discuss controversial, polarizing nationalist historical figures. Ivasiuk's ambiguity and mass appeal also made him a useful symbol for opposition political activists (at least in western Ukraine). Whatever their genuine regard for Ivasiuk, members of the opposition could harness his popularity and relatively uncontroversial nature for their own political purposes.

Culture and history continued to arouse a great deal of popular interest around this time in Ukraine. This was in part because debates over the interpretation of history or cultural policy served as a means to tentatively raise more controversial political questions. At the same time, 1989 was clearly a turning point when broader political questions (such as political and economic sovereignty for Ukraine) began to overshadow the concern with revitalizing Ukrainian culture. Ivasiuk was probably near the peak of his prominence in the media and in political debates; the growing emphasis on politics rather than culture meant that the composer would not be nearly as prominent a political symbol in 1990 and 1991.

Political and Cultural Developments in 1989

The prominent public commemorations of Volodymyr Ivasiuk and debates over his legacy which took place in 1989 occurred at a time when opposition groups in Ukraine (particularly in Lviv) were becoming increasingly vocal and achieving significant success. There was still significant resistance to change on the part of the authorities, however. The Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) remained much more conservative than its counterparts in the Baltic republics or Poland, although this would change to some degree when Volodymyr Ivashko replaced Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi as first secretary of the CPU in September.[2]

For one Canadian observer, Kyiv and Lviv in 1989 represented a fascinating combination of dire economic hardship and increasingly vibrant civic culture. Oleh Ilnytzkyj was in Kyiv briefly in early 1989 and spent several months in Lviv and Kyiv at the end of the year. He observed an increasing boldness on the part of Kyivans and especially Lvivites; over the course of the year they became less and less afraid of challenging the authorities. In Lviv in particular, people engaged in vigorous political debates in the city centre at nearly all hours of the day and had a voracious appetite for information about previously forbidden areas of their own history. The political and intellectual engagement of the residents of Kyiv and Lviv was all the more remarkable when viewed against the backdrop of constant food shortages and other economic problems which plagued Ukraine in 1989. According to Ilnytzkyj, Ukrainians had a "crisis mentality" at this time, a feeling that they were experiencing a "now or never" moment when radical political change was both possible and urgently necessary.[3]

Serge Cipko, who spent time in Lviv from the fall of 1989 to the summer of 1990, recalled that the population was under a great deal of stress because of the economic situation and that many people were frustrated by the slow pace of change. At the same time, there was

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[2] Bohdan Nahaylo, *The Ukrainian Resurgence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 201-203.
[3] Interview with Oleh Ilnytzkyj, November 5, 2007.

a widespread sentiment that Lvivites were "carrying the torch" of national revival and political change and the population was no longer frightened of confrontation with the regime.[4]

By late 1988 and early 1989, "the national revival was...beginning to assume openly political forms" in western Ukraine, particularly in Lviv. The Ukrainian Christian Democratic Front, a small group which formed in the Ivano-Frankivsk oblast in November 1988 and held its first meeting in Lviv in January 1989, was notable as one of the first organizations to openly advocate Ukrainian independence. The founders of the organization were the former political prisoners Petro and Vasyl Sichko, who had celebrated the "nationalist Sabbath" on Ivasiuk's grave in 1979. There were other signs of increasing political radicalization throughout 1989. Several organizations which were more radical than the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (UHU) but were led by members or supporters of the UHU appeared in Lviv and Kyiv in early 1989. Rukh also became more radical over the course of the year.[5]

In early 1989, the leadership of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) made some concessions on cultural issues, publishing a decree in support of the promotion of the use of the Ukrainian language which promised to "develop Ukrainian national culture." This revitalization of Ukrainian culture was to be based on the principles of "Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, 'socialism' and 'internationalism,'" however. Many activists viewed these changes as coming far too late, the reluctant concessions of a leadership that "had been hostile all along to any Ukrainian national revival." Bohdan Nahaylo argues that the political situation had changed so much by this point that concessions on language issues would no longer satisfy the opposition: "language and cultural issues, though still highly important,

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[4] Interview with Serge Cipko, August 14, 2007.
[5] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 166, 167, 179, 183, 204.

had been overtaken by political and economic ones concerning democratization and republican sovereignty."[6]

Despite the success of the CPU in manipulating the registration of candidates to largely exclude national democrats from running, several prominent national democrats were elected (and a number of prominent Communists defeated) in the March elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, as well as in the runoff elections which followed. Perhaps more importantly, the election process had a significance beyond the relatively small number of opposition candidates elected: "the drawn-out election struggle contributed significantly to the politicization of society and resulted in a psychological and political breakthrough."[7]

The May Day protests in Lviv and Chervonohrad, which featured thousands of supporters of Rukh and of Ivan Drach's candidacy in the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, many of them carrying blue and yellow flags, were a crucial juncture for the opposition. According to Nahaylo, these events showed that "the struggle for democracy and reform, of which Rukh was now the embodiment, had fused—in Western Ukraine at any rate—with the cause of national self-determination and national emancipation." The Lviv region Rukh organization was organized on May 7, 1989, and its demands were more radical than those of many existing opposition groups. The restoration of Ukrainian national symbols which had been repressed by the Soviet regime, such as the *tryzub* (trident) and blue and yellow flag, was to become increasingly important from this point forward.[8]

The national democratic opposition (which would eventually consolidate under the umbrella of Rukh) grew rapidly in 1989 and began to win support outside Kyiv and western Ukraine, although there was a "lack of support, and frequently even of understanding," for the national democrats among the heavily Russified populations of eastern and southern

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[6] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 166.
[7] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 183-87, 194.
[8] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 189.

Ukraine. This was most prominently demonstrated during the miners' strikes which began in July. Despite their dissatisfaction with the Party, the miners focused on improving their own well-being and viewed national democratic activists from other regions with suspicion.[9]

One of the opposition's greatest successes was the inaugural congress of Rukh, held in Kyiv in September. By the time of the congress, Rukh had almost 280,000 members. Western Ukraine was heavily overrepresented at the congress, although delegates from all regions of Ukraine were present. The congress showed that Rukh had been fairly successful in building a coalition of various ethnic, political and social groups. Nahaylo calls the congress "a celebration of the national and political awakening of Ukraine and...a landmark in modern Ukrainian history." [10]

The tone of the congress demonstrated the increasing prominence of political issues, the radicalization of the opposition, and the success of the Ukrainian national revival. Some speakers at the congress (Levko Lukianenko and Viacheslav Chornovil) called for the outright independence of Ukraine, but most of those who spoke supported a sovereign Ukraine within a confederated USSR. Other political themes discussed at the congress included the needs for Ukrainian sovereignty in the economic sphere and for a military independent of Moscow's control.[11]

Several other noteworthy developments occurred in September 1989. The first Chervona Ruta music festival (which will be addressed in more detail below) also took place in September 1989. The festival "revealed that the national revival had affected the younger generation and that a vibrant new 'Ukrainian' pop culture was developing."[12] An enormous demonstration took place in Lviv in September 1989, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet annexation of western Ukraine. A crowd numbering 150,000 marched to demand the

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[9] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 206-209.
[10] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 217, 218.
[11] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 218-220.
[12] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 224, 225.

legalization of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. On September 19, Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi and two other members of the CPU Politburo retired, which provoked jubilation among the national democrats. Shcherbytskyi's successor, Volodymyr Ivashko, appeared at first to be more open to change than his predecessor.[13]

In late 1989, the Verkhovna Rada (Supreme Soviet) of the republic reformed its own operations to more closely resemble a democratic legislature, passed a freer election law which would affect the elections of March 1990, and, most notably, declared Ukrainian the state language of the Ukrainian SSR. The role of the CPU leadership in supporting the law and making attempts to reassure Russian speakers about its impact were remarkable because this was the first time since the early 1970s that "the Party and state leaders of the Ukrainian SSR had come out in defence of Ukrainian national rights."[14]

History and Culture in Political Discourse

As noted above, political and economic issues began to eclipse cultural issues in 1989. Nonetheless, there were noteworthy developments in the cultural sphere as well, in addition to the granting of state status for the Ukrainian language. The process of filling in the "blank spots" in Ukrainian history continued and intensified in 1989. An increasing number of articles were published in the press on previously forbidden topics, including the works of Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, and the 1932-33 famine in eastern Ukraine.[15]

Two prominent new organizations focused on cultural and historical issues—albeit issues in these areas which often had significant political implications. The republican Native Language Society (the name the authorities at first insisted be used by the Ukrainian Language Society), held its inaugural congress in February 1989. At the congress, the

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[13] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 224, 225, 228.
[14] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 235, 237.
[15] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 179, 180.

Society's delegates insisted that Ukrainian be declared the state language of the Ukrainian SSR as soon as possible.[16] The Ukrainian Memorial Society, another organization which held its founding conference in early 1989, was dedicated to uncovering the "political crimes" of the Soviet era and challenging the official version of Ukrainian history.[17]

Official historical commemorations were a prominent area of political dispute in 1989. Opposition groups including Rukh expressed their opposition to the official commemorations of the Battle of Poltava in July 1989. The eighteenth-century battle resulted in the defeat of the Cossacks under Ivan Mazepa, along with their Swedish allies, by the armies of Peter the Great, eventually allowing the Tsar to rule over all the east Slavs. In opposition to the celebrations, the national democrats portrayed the Cossacks as heroes and the battle as an unsuccessful "nationalist uprising." Another disputed historical commemoration was the fiftieth anniversary of the "reunification" of western Ukraine with eastern Ukraine. While the official commemorations had a celebratory tone and ignored the repression which accompanied the "reunification," the opposition emphasized the activities of the OUN, which engaged in armed resistance to the Soviets in western Ukraine.[18]

After the founding of the republican Memorial organization, several Stalinist atrocities which had been attributed to the Nazis or hidden from the public altogether were officially acknowledged to have been committed by the Soviet regime. Massacre sites from the Stalinist era continued to be discovered throughout Ukraine in the months that followed. The continuing public attention to Soviet crimes had real political consequences in Western Ukraine, undermining both the official plans for the celebration of the anniversary of the

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[16] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 170.
[17] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 180.
[18] Catherine Wanner, *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 149.

"reunification" of western Ukraine with the Soviet Union and the official characterization of the OUN-UPA as "fascists" and "bandits."[19]

An important landmark in the commemoration of suppressed historical figures occurred in November, when thousands of people participated in the reburial in Kyiv of Vasyl Stus, Iurii Lytvyn and Oleksii Tykhyi, "Ukraine's most recent national martyrs." Stus was a poet and Lytvyn and Tykhyi were dissidents. The three men had died while imprisoned in labour camps in 1984 and 1985.[20]

The battle over the banned Ukrainian national symbols (the blue and yellow flag and *tryzub* (trident)) continued over the course of 1989, with the symbols being displayed more and more often as the year went on. The flag was first flown in Lviv soon after the elections of March 26, at a demonstration to commemorate the third anniversary of the Chornobyl explosion. The mayor of Lviv, who was speaking at the time, did not react to the appearance of the banned symbol he had denounced in the past, and so blue and yellow flags were soon in evidence at several events in Lviv and eventually in other parts of Ukraine.[21] Blue and yellow flags first appeared in Kyiv on May 21, at an official outdoor commemoration of Taras Shevchenko.[22] In response to increasing public pressure (at least in western Ukraine and Kyiv), a Supreme Soviet committee held hearings to study the restoration of Ukrainian national symbols. In the end, Leonid Kravchuk, the chairman of the committee, reiterated the official line, that the trident and blue and yellow flag were "dirty and bloody symbols" and that no change from the Soviet Ukrainian symbols was necessary.[23]

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[19] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 200, 201.
[20] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 242.
[21] Padraic Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance, 1987-1990," in *Lviv: A City in the Crossroads of Culture*, ed. John Czaplicka, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 310.
[22] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 194.
[23] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 201.

The Lion Society: A Case of the Shift from Culture to Politics

The activities of the Lion Society in Lviv reflected the shift from cultural to explicitly political concerns in the arena of public debate. While the group had focused to a large degree on the concrete work of cultural revival in the past, with the eventual aim of effecting broader political and cultural change, in 1989 its focus shifted to more explicitly political activities. This was no doubt in part because of the greater opportunities for political activism now present in a freer atmosphere with an emboldened opposition. The Lion Society worked to nominate its own candidate for the spring 1989 elections, Rostyslav Bratun, despite the Communist Party's efforts to obstruct his candidacy, and began publishing its own *samvydav* newspaper, *Postup*, during the election campaign. Its first issue promoted Bratun's electoral program. Lion Society members were also dedicated supporters of other national democratic candidates.[24]

As Padraic Kenney points out, despite the Lion Society's prominence in political activity in early 1989, other, more radical groups would soon begin to play a leading role: "the torch of revolution was passing to groups more focused on a nationalist agenda…the emphasis now shifted to the formation of popular fronts, to weighty congresses of nationalist intellectuals, and to emerging political parties." As the national democrats gained more support in Kyiv and the focus of opposition activity shifted to political questions such as sovereignty, the focus of the movement also shifted from Lviv to Kyiv.[25]

The Myth of Ivasiuk Develops

During a period when public discourse began to shift from culture to politics, albeit with a strong focus on culture, Volodymyr Ivasiuk probably reached the peak of his political significance. It is clear that by early 1989, efforts to inform the public about Volodymyr

[24] Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance," 305, 309.
[25] Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance," 310-311.

Ivasiuk's legacy and rehabilitate the composer's reputation in the official press had achieved some success. An introduction to a March 1989 article by Ivan Lepsha in *Kultura i zhyttia* noted that interest in the composer's output had increased in the recent past and that his works were being performed more often.[26] In the article itself, Lepsha described the suppression of Ivasiuk's music after the composer's death and argued that in 1988 "fairness won," as Ivasiuk was finally awarded the Ostrovskyi prize. For Lepsha, this was the beginning of a process of bringing the composer and his music to their rightful place in public opinion. Like other observers, Lepsha saw Ivasiuk and his music as belonging to the people and characterized the official efforts to suppress Ivasiuk's music as an attempt to take the composer from the people, a process which was now being reversed: "The first step towards the return of Volodymyr Ivasiuk to us has been completed."[27] Rostyslav Bratun observed in September that Ivasiuk's "renaissance" was beginning as a result of the political changes of the period: "The fresh wind of *perebudova* [*perestroika*] has brought Volodia's music into our everyday lives (*povsiakdennia*)." One sign of Ivasiuk's "renaissance" was the fact that professional musicians were beginning to incorporate Ivasiuk's music into their repertoire.[28]

Mykhailo Ivasiuk's writings about his son had evidently played a significant role in educating the public about the composer as well. The telephone calls and letters received by the editors of *Zhovten*, the Writers' Union journal, during the course of 1989 show that Mykhailo Ivasiuk's recollections of his son, which were published in the journal in 1988, had made a strong impression on at least some readers and that they viewed Ivasiuk's legacy as neglected. A reader from Drohobych in western Ukraine noted that a greater effort was necessary to commemorate Volodymyr Ivasiuk, writing that "[t]he glorious (*slavne*) name of the young talented composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk should not be covered in the dust of gradual oblivion (*pylom postupovoho zabuttia*), because this would be a crime before our youth and

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[26] Unsigned introduction to Ivan Lepsha, "Ioho pisnia pomizh nas," *Kultura i zhyttia*, March 26, 1989.
[27] Ivan Lepsha, "Ioho pisnia pomizh nas," *Kultura i zhyttia*, March 26, 1989.
[28] Rostyslav Bratun, "Kvitny, 'Chervona Ruto!,'" *Molodyi bukovynets*, 11-17 September, 1989.

the entire musical culture of Ukraine." In order to rectify the situation, this reader suggested that a museum in honour of Ivasiuk, named "Chervona Ruta," be established in Lviv or Chernivtsi. Another reader, from the Donetsk oblast in eastern Ukraine, pointed out that Mykhailo Ivasiuk's articles made no mention of the circumstances of his son's death or place of burial. The reader also noted that the composer's songs were absent from radio and television, and asked if there had been an official investigation into Ivasiuk's death.[29]

When the process of Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation" began in 1987 and 1988, the composer's supporters aimed largely to educate the public about the composer's life and work, reestablish his reputation, and honour the composer in a few (often modest) ways—awarding him the Komsomol Ostrovskyi prize to which he should have been entitled and naming a music festival in his honour. In 1989, efforts to commemorate Ivasiuk would continue and intensify.

Commemorations of Volodymyr Ivasiuk in 1989

The year 1989 featured an unprecedented degree of media interest in and public commemorations of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, for a number of reasons. First of all, the fortieth anniversary of Ivasiuk's birth (March 1949) and the tenth anniversary of his death (April 1979) both occurred in 1989. The large number of articles on Ivasiuk published in 1989 can also be explained in part by the attention to Ivasiuk generated by the first Chervona Ruta festival. It is also likely that the increased interest in Ivasiuk on the part of the press reflected a freer press and a more positive official view of Ivasiuk.

Aside from the debate over the Chervona Ruta festival as a whole and the place of Ivasiuk and his music in it, other specific commemorations of Ivasiuk which were held in 1989 also generated some controversy. Criticisms of memorial concerts in the composer's honour often focused on aesthetic questions such as the quality of the performances.

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[29] "Dzvinky do redaktsii," *Zhovten*, March 1989, no. 3:63.

While the increased commemoration of Ivasiuk in 1989 took place in the context of a Ukrainian national revival and growing opposition to the Soviet regime, the political implications of Ivasiuk's legacy were ambiguous. On one hand, articles on Ivasiuk often emphasized his mistreatment at the hands of the Soviet regime and the attempts to silence his work after his death, portraying Ivasiuk as one of many talented Ukrainian artists whose creativity was stifled by the Brezhnev regime. Ivasiuk's devotion to the Ukrainian people was often emphasized, and the composer was sometimes portrayed as a useful example of national pride and accomplishment for Ukrainians living in Gorbachev-era Ukraine. Ivasiuk's legacy was used for explicitly anti-Soviet, Ukrainian nationalist purposes in commemorations in Chernivtsi and Lviv. In one case, however, an article defending the status quo portrayed Ivasiuk in opposition to what the regime saw as the extremist nationalism of the Chervona Ruta festival.

Commemorative Events in Lviv and Kyiv

One of the most prominent commemorative events in honour of Volodymyr Ivasiuk took place in Lviv in early 1989. The Lion Society and the Ukrainian Cultural Fund held a concert in honour of the fortieth anniversary of Ivasiuk's birth. A description of the concert in *Postup* praised the aims of the concert but was critical of the execution of the event, noting that many of the performances were boring. Nonetheless, according to the account in *Postup*, the evening's program included an impressive speech by Rostyslav Bratun.[30] The speeches by Bratun, Mykhailo Ivasiuk and the musician Kyrylo Stetsenko combined praise for Ivasiuk with attacks on the bureaucrats who attempted to silence his music and criticism of the Ukrainian people in general for their attitude towards important cultural figures. Bratun argued that Ivasiuk's fate showed that Ukrainians "are unable to honour the artist in life or in death," as well as the "absence of talent (*bezdarnist*) and greyness that control culture,

[30] Serhii Badik, "Vechir-Spohad (Skorocheno)," *Postup*, April 1989, no. 1.

trampling and debasing (*prynyzhuiut*) talent." He also tied the honouring of Ivasiuk's memory and works to the fate of the nation's soul, urging his audience to honour the "national treasure" that was Ivasiuk's music so that Ukrainians would not become "spiritual beggars." Bratun argued that Ivasiuk's music was worthy of respect because Ivasiuk "followed the path of the *kobzar* [either an itinerant minstrel or Taras Shevchenko], the path of serving Ukraine."[31] Mykhailo Ivasiuk emphasized his son's love for and understanding of the Ukrainian people (*narod*). Stetsenko's speech echoed Bratun's criticism of the bureaucrats who had silenced Ivasiuk's music.[32]

A later article in *Kultura i zhyttia*, the official newspaper of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Committee of the Union of Cultural Workers, noted that certain prominent government representatives (*povnovazhni predstavnyky*) and even many of the musicians who had collaborated with Ivasiuk during his life failed to attend the first concert of Ivasiuk's music after the ten-year "silence" during which his work was rarely performed.[33] (This was probably the same event as the concert in Lviv described above). Therefore, even in 1989, some individuals still appeared to view Volodymyr Ivasiuk as ideologically suspect.

The commemorative concert in Lviv was also a crucial development in the commemoration of Ivasiuk because it was tied to efforts to memorialize the composer through physical monuments in Lviv. Funds raised at the concert were to be used towards the erection of a memorial plaque on the apartment building where the composer lived in Lviv and for the addition of a monument on Ivasiuk's grave.[34] Public support for this kind of physical commemoration existed even before the concert. A *Zhovten* reader from Lviv contacted the editors of the journal in early 1989, asking when a memorial would be constructed on the grave and suggesting that society (*hromadskist*) should raise funds if the

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[31] Roman Ratushnyi, "Ne zhas vohon ioho dushi," *Zhovten*, July 1989, no. 7:134.
[32] Ratushnyi, "Ne zhas vohon," 134.
[33] P. Romaniuk, "Lito piznikh zhorzhyn," *Kultura i zhyttia*, September 17, 1989.
[34] Ratushnyi, "Ne zhas vohon," 135.

composer's family could not afford a gravestone. She also asked why the leading members of the Union of Composers of Ukraine were silent on this question.[35] Another exchange between a *Zhovten* reader and the journal's editors in May 1989, this time on the topic of changing place names and street names, also touched on the commemoration of Ivasiuk and was one early expression of support for commemorating Ivasiuk in a prominent fashion by naming a street after him. The editors' response to a reader's suggestions for place name changes in Nesterov (Zhovkva) prompted the editors to suggest that instead of certain streets in Lviv being named after prominent Stalinist government figures, they should be renamed after such Ukrainian cultural figures as Ivasiuk and the poet Bohdan-Ihor Antonych.[36]

The efforts to install a gravestone on Ivasiuk's grave took place in the context of a broader debate about restoring the Lychakiv cemetery. An article in *Zhovten* from March 1989 noted that an intense debate over what to do with the decrepit cemetery had been taking place in Lviv over the past few years.[37] The cemetery had a great deal of political significance as a reminder of the pre-Soviet legacy of Lviv and the burial place of many important Polish and Ukrainian cultural figures. The Lion Society had begun its effort to revive Ukrainian culture in 1987 by cleaning monuments in Lviv, including graves in the Lychakiv cemetery.[38]

The commemorative gatherings which had begun to be held at Ivasiuk's grave immediately after his death continued in 1989, revealing a great deal about the symbolic importance of the composer as both a pop culture icon and a political symbol. Ostap Skrypnyk, a Canadian who was in Lviv in 1989 recalled that a large procession to Ivasiuk's grave took place some time in 1989. According to Skrypnyk, the participants included both political activists for whom the event was essentially a political rally and individuals who appeared to be simply fans of Ivasiuk—for example, middle-aged women carrying

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[35] "Dzvinok do redaktsii," *Zhovten*, March 1989, no. 3:75.
[36] "Dzvinok do redaktsii," *Zhovten*, May 1989, no. 5:93.
[37] "Pres-sluzhba *Zhovtnia*," *Zhovten*, March 1989, no. 3:109.
[38] Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance," 305, 306.

photographs of the composer.[39] Another Canadian who spent time in Lviv in 1990 heard opposition leaders describe prayer services on Ivasiuk's grave serving as a form of covert political protest in earlier years.[40] Ivasiuk's stature was also a result of the transitional nature of 1989. According to Oleh Ilnytzkyj, Lvivites needed symbols during this time of enormous political and social change, and Ivasiuk served as such a symbol.[41]

The commemorative gatherings at Volodymyr Ivasiuk's grave were quite large by the fall of 1989, prompting criticism from one journalist. P. Romaniuk complained that the composer was not always being commemorated in an appropriate manner; the gatherings near Ivasiuk's grave on the anniversary of his death had become too unruly. Romaniuk also noted that on the anniversary of Ivasiuk's death, people came to the Lychakiv cemetery for "so-called '*panakhydy*' (prayer services)" which included singing, lighting candles and bringing flowers to the composer's grave. He conceded that a "quiet prayer" for Ivasiuk might be appropriate, but complained that the people who gathered near the grave trampled the neighbouring graves and climbed on the gravestones. In Romaniuk's view, this was not an appropriate way to make up for the suppression of Ivasiuk's legacy: "I suspect that Volodia did not earn and does not need this kind of 'popularity.'" For Romaniuk, naming festivals and youth clubs after the composer was a more appropriate form of commemoration, as these activities represented "[t]he return of [Ivasiuk's] work (*tvorchist*)" and spirit.[42]

Commemorative events for Ivasiuk were not confined to Lviv and (as will be described below) Chernivtsi. A commemorative concert for Ivasiuk was also held in Kyiv in March 1989, on the occasion of what would have been the composer's fortieth birthday. Tetiana Bohdanova's account of the event in *Literaturna Ukraina* argued that the memorial concert, held in the Republican Building of Writers and directed by Volodymyr Kolomiiets,

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[39] Information provided by Ostap Skrypnyk, January 26, 2008.
[40] Information provided by Michael Savaryn, January 30, 2008.
[41] Interview with Oleh Ilnytzkyj, November 5, 2007.
[42] Romaniuk, "Lito piznikh zhorzhyn."

showed that Ivasiuk had touched the hearts of millions. The composer's friends and relatives, including Mykhailo Ivasiuk and Iurii Rybchynskyi, spoke at the event. According to Bohdanova, their reminiscences pointed out that Ivasiuk was "conscious of his high mission as spokesman in song (*pisennyi rechnyk*) of his native people (*narod*)." Some of the speakers also complained that the composer was not being honoured properly—"it is not easy for the memory of Volodymyr Ivasiuk to survive today." Many of the speakers expressed their dismay that there was no street named after Ivasiuk. Lidiia Mykhailenko, a Merited Artist of Ukraine, also performed some of Ivasiuk's songs at the event. The sisters Halyna and Lesia Telniuk also performed a duet at the concert, which Bohdanova used as an example of Ivasiuk's continuing relevance to the youth of Ukraine.[43]

The First Chervona Ruta Festival

The first Chervona Ruta festival, which took place in September 1989, was a particularly large event which was dedicated to the memory of Volodymyr Ivasiuk and also incorporated specific commemorations of his legacy. As noted earlier, the increased attention to Ivasiuk in the official press was to a great degree a result of the widespread coverage of the preparations for Chervona Ruta and the festival itself.

While the idea of holding a festival of Ukrainian popular music in honour of Ivasiuk was first expressed in print by Ivan Lepsha in the fall of 1987, the two individuals instrumental in developing the idea were Taras Melnyk and Anatolii Kalenychenko, students at the Kyiv Conservatory of Music in 1988. Melnyk and Kalenychenko, along with the poet Ivan Malkovych, put forth their arguments for a festival in an article published in several republican and regional newspapers, as well as in pamphlet form, in the spring and summer of 1989. A second article was published on behalf of the entire festival organizing committee

[43] Tetiana Bohdanova, "Lytsar pisni," *Literaturna Ukraina*, March 16, 1989.

at the same time, with the intended audience being Ukrainians and "those who respected Ukrainian culture," both in Ukraine and abroad.[44]

The festival organizers justified the plan for a festival in part with the argument that Ukrainian popular music was in a dire state. Songs in Russian, Italian and English were marginalizing Ukrainian-language contemporary music, and Ukrainian music was not maintaining its relevance to youth. Because of the dominant conception of "the national" as restricted to "a form of ethnographism," the development of Ukrainian pop music was being artificially retarded and this served to drive young people away from Ukrainian music and culture.[45]

To remedy this problem, the festival organizers argued that it was necessary to develop more contemporary forms of Ukrainian popular music. They disagreed with those who argued that Ukrainian music should continue the artistic course begun by Ivasiuk. Neither should Ukrainian popular music simply ape foreign musical styles. For Melnyk, Kalenychenko and others, it was also crucial that Ukrainian popular music be sung in Ukrainian. Their goal was "to create a genuinely contemporary, deeply national style in pop music. For this to occur, what is needed is, on the one hand, to clean the old-fashioned pseudo-national layers from the national, revealing its true face, and, on the other, to free itself from the burden of the canons of western pop music, and to join the national with the contemporary." Holding a festival of contemporary Ukrainian music would begin the process of revitalizing Ukrainian popular music.[46]

Festival participants competed in three musical categories: popular music, "bard (balladeer or singer-songwriter) songs" and rock music. The winners of the oblast-level competed in the republican festival in Chernivtsi. Participation in the festival was restricted to

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[44] Bohdan Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics:. the First Chervona Ruta Festival of 1989," draft paper, April 2007, 2, 3.
[45] Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics," 3, 4.
[46] Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics," 4-6.

younger artists who had not achieved significant official recognition and songs performed at the festival were to be sung only in Ukrainian. Artists from outside Ukraine could perform at the festival but did not participate in the competitions. One of the controversial performers at the republican festival was Taras Petrynenko, who was subjected to official criticism (and prohibited from performing at the close of the festival) because he sang a song about Rukh. Most of the artists who performed in Chernivtsi (and a majority of the winners) were from western Ukraine and Kyiv; other regions of Ukraine sent few performers to the festival. [47] The first Chervona Ruta festival featured a variety of artists representing several different styles. The singer Vasyl Zhdankin from Lviv won the grand prize. Several artists from the Ukrainian diaspora, most of them performing traditional styles, also performed at the festival.[48] Winners in other categories included Andrii Mykolaichuk of Cherkasy oblast and Taras Kurchyk of Lviv, who tied for second prize in the pop music class (there was no first-prize winner). Several groundbreaking new artists won awards in the rock category. First prize went to the Lviv singer "Sestrychka Vika," while the Kyiv band Komu Vnyz and Lviv's Braty Hadiukiny (the Viper Brothers) shared second prize. First prize in the *spivets* or bard category was shared by Eduard Drach of Cherkasy and Viktor Morozov of Lviv.[49]

The festival was a cultural and political milestone, a significant stage in the Ukrainian cultural revival which began during the perestroika years. Chervona Ruta "was a celebration of Ukrainian culture and aimed to promote the Ukrainian national revival that was already underway." It is also possible that the festival increased the popularity of Rukh.[50] Chervona Ruta was criticized by some elements of the regime for its excessively Ukrainian nationalist character, as well as for the dominance of contemporary rather than traditional

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[47] Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics," 9, 18, 25.
[48] Ivan Lepsha, "Kvitny Slavoiu, 'Chervona Ruto!'," *Suchasnist*, February 1990, no. 2:37, 40.
[49] "Chervona Ruta. Visnyk Festyvaliu," September 24, 1989.
[50] Catherine Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage: Music and Change in Soviet Ukraine," in *Retuning Culture: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Mark Slobin (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 137.

styles of music.[51] Some observers also complained that Ivasiuk's music had been largely absent from the festival named after his best-known composition and dedicated to the composer.

The first Chervona Ruta festival included a number of commemorations of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Most obviously, the festival was dedicated to Volodymyr Ivasiuk and named after "Chervona Ruta," his most famous song, and the grand prize of the competition was also named after the composer.[52] One observer even saw the persecution of the festival by some elements of the regime as being connected to Volodymyr Ivasiuk's legacy. The harassment of festival participants by local authorities was interpreted by one journalist as "a continuation of the taboo on Ivasiuk."[53]

The poet Dmytro Pavlychko, who spoke at the festival, noted the significance of Ukrainian music being reborn through the "Chervona Ruta" festival in Bukovyna, the region of origin of Volodymyr Ivasiuk and other noted cultural figures.[54] Catherine Wanner argues that the location of the festival (Ivasiuk spent much of his life in Chernivtsi) and "naming the festival after his most renowned song created much emotionally charged symbolic capital."[55]

In addition to Ivasiuk's broader symbolic role as "spiritual patron" of the festival, the composer and his music were commemorated during the course of the festival in several other ways. First of all, Mykhailo Ivasiuk spoke about his son at the festival. His speech reemphasized his son's dreams for the role of music in the rebirth of Ukrainian culture. The composer's father said that "Music (*pisnia*) should help us grow to our full development (*zrist*), to love our traditions and our contemporary culture (*suchasne*)."[56] One journalist

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[51] Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics," 22, 23.
[52] Klid, "Popular Music, Identity and Politics," 9.
[53] Ihor Chekhovskyi, "A pisnia zalyshaietsia," *Molod Ukrainy*, September 23, 1989.
[54] Hryhorii Molodynets, "Chas pershoho mlyva," *Molodyi Bukovynets*, 8-24 September, 1989.
[55] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 137.
[56] Molodynets, "Chas pershoho mlyva."

suggested that Mykhailo Ivasiuk may have been the most popular person at the festival,[57] in part reflecting the reverence with which his son was viewed. Several artists performed Ivasiuk's songs during the course of the festival,[58] although (as will be discussed below), some critics argued that more of Ivasiuk's music should have been performed.

A commemorative concert for Ivasiuk was also held at the University of Chernivtsi which included performances by a number of musical artists.[59] One journalist suggested that an event in honour of Ivasiuk might not be acceptable to the authorities (although it is unclear whether this was because of a lingering stigma attached to Ivasiuk's name or a result of the general hostility of the local authorities to the festival), writing on September 23 that a memorial concert would take place soon "if the local authorities do not prohibit it."[60] After the festival, a concert in honour of Ivasiuk was also held in the composer's nearby home town, Kitsman, with the participation of the festival winners and guests.[61]

Volodymyr Ivasiuk was commemorated in physical form during the festival as well. A large photograph of Ivasiuk was suspended above the stage[62] and a commemorative plaque was placed on the apartment building in Chernivtsi where the composer had lived for much of his life.[63] A room dedicated to Ivasiuk was opened at the Chernivtsi oblast local history museum[64] and an exhibition dedicated to Ivasiuk's life and work was held in Chernivtsi during the festival as well.[65] Buttons bearing Ivasiuk's image were also sold at the festival.[66]

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[57] Iu. Kril, " 'Muzyka—pamiat o nem,'" *Komsomolskoe znamia*, September 24, 1989.
[58] O. V. Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy pro festyval 'Chervona Ruta,'" *Narodna tvorchist ta etnohrafiia*, 1990, no. 2:40.
[59] Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy," 40, 41; Volodymyr Tomeshko, "Chy stanemo mudrishymy?" *Molod Ukrainy*, Sep. 27, 1989. A nearly identical article was published, without an author listed, in the festival newsletter. "Chy stanemo rozumnymy," "'Chervona Ruta,' visnyk festyvaliu," September 23, 1989.
[60] Ivan Bezsmertnyi, "'Chervona Ruta' rozpravliaie kryla," *Molod Ukrainy*, September 23, 1989.
[61] Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy," 41.
[62] Hryhorii Molodynets, "Chas pershoho mlyva," *Molodyi Bukovynets*, 8-24 September, 1989.
[63] Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy," 40, 41; Volodymyr Tomeshko, "Chy stanemo mudrishymy?" *Molod Ukrainy*, Sep. 27, 1989.
[64] Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy," 41; Ihor Chekhovskyi, "Ty pryznaisia meni...rukopysy ne horiat," *Molodyi bukovynets*, September 11-17, 1989.
[65] H. Tarasiuk, "V dobru put," *Radianska Bukovyna*, September 20, 1989.

An official festival pamphlet included an excerpt from an article on Ivasiuk previously published in the western Ukrainian periodical *Rovesnyk*. This excerpt briefly summarized Ivasiuk's biography and praised his achievements, as well as noting the lack of official recognition he received during his life.[67]

The ceremony which accompanied the installation of the memorial plaque on Ivasiuk's former apartment building was noteworthy both because of its nationalist tone and due to the official harassment which accompanied the event. According to an account in *Viche*, the *samvydav* newspaper of the Lviv regional Rukh organization, several of the people attending the unveiling of the plaque on Maiakovskyi Street carried "national [i.e., blue and yellow] flags" and the ceremony was accompanied by "mournful singing." The author of the article, an O. Petryk, described the reverence paid to the composer by those attending, as well as the connection of national symbolism to Ivasiuk's memory: "People bowed to the memory of the young composer, dipping their flags." Like some other festival events, this commemoration was accompanied by official intimidation. Militia surrounded the gathering and there were individuals present in the crowd who attempted to provoke the participants. According to Petryk, these provocateurs "wanted to tear our flags, but the people defended (*vidstoiuvaly*) their right to their symbols." The ceremony was concluded with the singing of the banned Ukrainian national anthem, "*Shche ne vmerla Ukraina*." The crowd then moved towards a well which was to be blessed (it is unclear whether this was also a commemorative activity in memory of Ivasiuk), but found its path blocked by the militia. The display of banned Ukrainian national symbols and music at this event demonstrated that for some individuals attending the Chervona Ruta festival, Ivasiuk's memory was closely tied to

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[66] Yaroslav Chornohuz, "Chervona Ruta," *Ukraine*, March 1990, 17.
[67] Kyrylo Stetsenko, ed., *Festyval 'Chervona Ruta' Chernivtsi 1989*, pamphlet (n.p.: "Reklama," 1989).

Ukrainian nationalism or (as was the case in Lviv) that commemorations of Ivasiuk were a convenient pretext for expressing nationalist sentiment.[68]

Critical Reaction to Ivasiuk's Place in the Festival

Aside from the broader political and artistic controversy caused by the first Chervona Ruta festival, the role of Ivasiuk's music and legacy in the festival (or lack thereof) inspired debate in the press in the months that followed. Two articles published in an ethnography journal in 1989 provided contrasting views on this issue. While Olha Rutkovska, a journalist who had formerly been deputy director of the Republican Building of Folklore (*Budynok narodnoi tvorchosti*), lamented the fact that Ivasiuk's songs were rarely performed at the festival, L. S. Cherkashyna argued that the critics who complained about the dearth of Ivasiuk's music at the festival had misunderstood the aims of Chervona Ruta.[69] For Cherkashyna, the festival was meant to propel Ukrainian music forward, and not simply to reproduce Ivasiuk's music. The festival's contribution to the development of Ukrainian music was in fact a more appropriate commemoration of Ivasiuk: "[s]uch a living and not a canonized memory of Volodymyr Ivasiuk is more worthy of him."[70]

Some observers were also critical of the memorial concert dedicated to Ivasiuk which was held during the festival. A correspondent for *Molod Ukrainy*, Volodymyr Tomeshko, expressed a number of concerns about the commemorative evening, including the fact that a *perepustka* (pass) was necessary for admission. Tomeshko claimed that this requirement was offensive because Volodymyr Ivasiuk's music "came and settled in our soul without any entrance visas." He added that this evening program, like many festival events, started late, and that although a variety of musical styles were represented, "The only thing lacking was a

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[68] O. Petryk, "Festyval za koliuchym drotom," *Viche* October 1989, no. 8.
[69] Rutkovska, "Polemichni rozdumy," 41; L. S. Cherkashyna, "'Chervona Ruta': Perskpektyvy rozvytku ukrainskoi estrady," *Narodna tvorchist ta etnohrafiia*, 1990, no. 2:43.
[70] Cherkashyna, " 'Chervona Ruta,'" 43.

single word about Volodymyr Ivasiuk, as well as his music." The sole mention of the composer's name was in the dedication to a song performed by Viktor Morozov. Although Mykhailo Ivasiuk was present at the event, none of the artists acknowledged the composer's father.[71] One of the attacks on Chervona Ruta published in the official press after the festival had ended also included criticism of the concert for Ivasiuk. The authors complained that "[t]he concert…did not have the scale, weight and artistry (*khudozhnist*) that it should have, considering the truly international love for the knight of Ukrainian song."[72] Two other observers, including Kyrylo Stetsenko, a member of the national festival organizing committee, praised the concert and wrote that they had been moved by the event.[73]

For the republican Komsomol newspaper *Molod Ukrainy*, the first Chervona Ruta festival completed the process of restoring Ivasiuk's reputation. As a result of the festival, *Molod Ukrainy* argued, "[p]eople will no longer begin to whisper at the mention of the name of Volodymyr Ivasiuk."[74] A reporter from *Komsomolskoe znamia* took a more skeptical view, pointing out that despite the awarding of the Ostrovskyi Prize in 1988, the publication of Ivasiuk's work and the completion of the festival, Ivasiuk was still not sufficiently appreciated; some individuals were continuing attempts to minimize the importance of the composer—reducing his *oeuvre* to two or three pop songs rather than the many dozens of compositions he in fact created.[75]

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[71] Volodymyr Tomeshko, "Chy stanemo mudrishymy?" *Molod Ukrainy*, September 27, 1989.
[72] Iurii Briazhunov and Maksym Mishchenko, "Tsvit i terny 'Chervonoi Ruty,'" *Molod Ukrainy*, October 4, 1989.
[73] Kyrylo Stetsenko and Ivan Bezsmertnyi, "Pid akompanament baiduzhosti," *Molod Ukrainy*, September 24, 1989.
[74] "Chym zapamiatalosia sviato," *Molod Ukrainy*, September 26, 1989.
[75] V. Kuleba, "Zvonche poi, 'Chervona Ruta!'" *Komsomolskoe znamia*, September 24, 1989.

Portrayals of Volodymyr Ivasiuk in the Press

In addition to the kinds of commemorative activities described above, the legacy of Volodymyr Ivasiuk and his music was maintained and shaped through narratives expressed during this period in articles published in the official press.

The narrative of Ivasiuk which emerges from an examination of the official and unofficial media during this period is a varied one. One common thread in many of the portrayals of Ivasiuk in 1989 (and also in 1988) is an emphasis on Ivasiuk's love of the Ukrainian people or nation (*narod*) and his service to the people. The composer is frequently portrayed as a tragic figure as well, a victim of the Brezhnev regime and its hostility or indifference to Ukrainian culture. However, the other elements of the narrative sometimes vary a great deal. One 1989 account emphasized his obedience to the Soviet state, and the composer was also used to implicitly defend the status quo during the debate over the Chervona Ruta festival. In late 1989, one journalist expressed his unease at the prospect of Ivasiuk being transformed into a national symbol and the truth of the composer's life and legacy being distorted in the process.

One account from early 1989 took pains to emphasize Ivasiuk's devotion to socialism while also portraying him as a nationally conscious artist. Maksym Mishchenko, a member of the Lviv oblast organizing committee of the Chervona Ruta festival, writing in *Molod Ukrainy*, both praised Ivasiuk for his dedication to the people (*narod*) and emphasized that Ivasiuk was an ideologically orthodox figure. Mishchenko wrote: "Ivasiuk remained faithful to the principles of socialist art to the end—he was a deeply national artist and at the same time an artist-internationalist."[76] While Mishchenko's attempt to establish Ivasiuk as *both* a good Ukrainian and a good Soviet may have been motivated in part by continuing restrictions on the press, it also shows that Ivasiuk's significance could be interpreted in a number of ways in 1989—Ivasiuk was not an unambiguously Soviet or anti-Soviet figure.

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[76] Maksym Mishchenko, "Pomizh nas ioho pisnia," *Molod Ukrainy*, April 9, 1989.

Other accounts display more antagonism towards the Soviet regime (at least the regime of the "period of stagnation") and portray the composer as a martyr of the Brezhnev regime. Mykola Ruban, a correspondent for the periodical *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, argued in late 1989 that Ivasiuk was a rare beacon of hope for Ukrainian culture during and after his life. Ruban denounced the "home-grown Janissaries" who in the past dismissed Ukrainian music as being archaic and having no future. Ivasiuk's work "breathed renewing (*onovliuiucha*) strength into the lungs" of the Ukrainian national character. Despite the fact that Ivasiuk fought an unfair battle in his efforts to revitalize Ukrainian music, he never "played the fool (*blazniuvav*)" and never "sold out" in return for rewards from the Soviet state. Ruban characterized Ivasiuk as one of many talented Ukrainians, the poet Vasyl Stus among them, who were successful outside Ukraine but who were either repressed or received little respect within Ukraine.[77]

Ruban emphasized the authenticity and love for his people demonstrated by Ivasiuk, traits which inspired many other Ukrainians after his death, and (like other commentators) emphasized that Ivasiuk and his music belonged to the people. According to Ruban, the bureaucrats from the Ministry of Culture who attempted to suppress Ivasiuk's work after the composer's death "tried to remove (*vyluchyty*) him from our culture but the people (*narod*) received the songs of the boy into their souls. It became impossible to remove the songs [of Ivasiuk] from the soul of the people." Ivasiuk also became an inspiration to many artists, a symbol of "devotion to the creative credo and to his people."[78]

A Chernivtsi journalist, Halyna Tarasiuk, also praised Volodymyr Ivasiuk's authenticity and service to the Ukrainian people in her coverage of the Chervona Ruta festival. Tarasiuk emphasized that Ivasiuk was not only a talented artist but also one who used his position for the good of the Ukrainian people: "Time tells (*chas pokazuie*) how

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[77] Mykola Ruban, "Posiiana nym ruta," *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, December 1989, 35.
[78] Ruban, "Posiiana nym ruta," 35.

much an honest and passionate (*prystrastnyi*) young talent who is conscious of his responsibility before the people (*narod*) can do for our native (*ridna*) spirituality." It was also noteworthy and admirable, according to Tarasiuk, that Ivasiuk found his inspiration in his native culture rather than overseas.[79]

For Tarasiuk, the suppression of Ivasiuk's memory was indicative of the broader repression of Ukrainian culture during the "period of stagnation." She calls the suppression of Ivasiuk's music after his death "a silence which we now, having breathed deeply of the fresh wind of *perebudova* (perestroika), bitterly call stagnation. During that time everything serious, important (*znachyme*), and national was suppressed (*tlumylosia*)" and the true national culture that existed was little publicized. On the other hand, "everything pseudo-national and trivial (*balahanne*) fruited (*plodylosia*) and multiplied," obscuring the real problems of Ukrainian culture.[80]

While commentators like Ruban and Tarasiuk portrayed Ivasiuk as an inspiration for improving the state of Ukrainian culture, the composer's legacy could also be used to defend the status quo. In one article written in response to the Chervona Ruta festival, Ivasiuk is implicitly contrasted with the "bourgeois nationalism" and aesthetic defects of the festival. Iurii Briazhunov and Maksym Mishchenko published an article in *Molod Ukrainy* in October 1989, as part of the official backlash against the festival. One of their numerous criticisms of the festival was that it often became more of a political rally (*mitynh*) than a music festival. The authors contrasted the legacy of Ivasiuk with the excessively politicized nature of many of the festival performers. According to the authors, it was "shameful" when a singer from Argentina, Claudia Polotnianka, sang Ivasiuk's "Chervona Ruta" at the final concert and "tactfully reminded [the audience] about Volodia Ivasiuk—the spiritual patron of the

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[79] H. Tarasiuk, "V dobru put," *Radianska Bukovyna*, September 20, 1989.
[80] Tarasiuk, "V dobru put."

festival."[81] Thus Ivasiuk is portrayed here as the apolitical spirit of the festival, in contrast with the ideological extremism of some of the participants. In this attack on the nationalism of Chervona Ruta, Ivasiuk is used to defend the status quo. Therefore, Ivasiuk was an ambiguous figure whose legacy could be used to both attack and (in this case) defend the status quo in 1989.

Ivasiuk as a National Symbol

The process of rehabilitating Volodymyr Ivasiuk's reputation in the official press had clearly achieved a great deal of success by the time of the Chervona Ruta festival. By late 1989, one observer saw the process advancing even further; Ivasiuk was no longer a somewhat ideologically suspect figure and was on the verge of becoming a Ukrainian national symbol. In an article written at this time, P. Romaniuk, apparently a thoughtful observer of the commemoration of the composer, expressed his concerns about what was becoming of Ivasiuk's legacy. Romaniuk worried that the negative aspects of Ivasiuk's life and death were being forgotten as the composer was being transformed into a national symbol. For Romaniuk, those who were vocal in their praise of Ivasiuk were trying to "grow laurels on thorns." Much of Romaniuk's article on the topic in *Kultura i zhyttia*, "Lito piznikh zhorzhyn" ("The Summer of the Late Roses"), is devoted to an account of the sorry state of Ukrainian culture during the Brezhnev years and the role played by certain bureaucrats and musicians in carrying out a near-ban on the performance of Ivasiuk's music after the composer's death. According to Romaniuk, it would be dishonest to paper over the real tragedy of Ivasiuk with a revisionist history which elevated the composer to the status of a hero. The journalist also asked whether giving Ivasiuk posthumous awards was appropriate

[81] Iurii Briazhunov and Maksym Mishchenko, "Tsvit i terny 'Chervonoi Ruty,'" *Molod Ukrainy*, October 4, 1989.

and suggested that perhaps Ivasiuk should be left as he was in life—an individual without a great deal of power or prestige.[82]

Conclusion

Over the course of 1989, Volodymyr Ivasiuk received a great deal of attention in the press and was commemorated in a variety of forms, most visibly through the Chervona Ruta festival. By the end of the year, it seems that there was little stigma attached to Ivasiuk in the official press, and he may in fact have been on the cusp of becoming a national symbol. The composer's significance was still ambiguous in 1989, however. Ivasiuk was generally identified with authenticity and support for Ukrainian culture, and portrayals of Ivasiuk were sometimes combined with anger at the decline of Ukrainian culture. In western Ukraine, Ivasiuk was sometimes associated with Ukrainian nationalism. Nonetheless, Ivasiuk could still be identified with loyalty to socialist principles or used to defend the Soviet regime from "bourgeois nationalism." While he may indeed have been a national hero to many Ukrainians in 1989, it is clear that Ivasiuk's legacy could mean different things to different people.

Ivasiuk's political significance clearly had a regional dimension. While Ivasiuk was well-known and popular throughout Ukraine and the USSR, his use as a political symbol was probably confined largely to western Ukraine and Kyiv. In Lviv in particular, commemorations of Ivasiuk were used as a covert form of political protest from the time of the composer's death, a practice that continued in 1989. While Ivasiuk was no doubt a "pop culture icon" for people in many regions of Ukraine, it appears unlikely that many people outside the nationally conscious western oblasts and Kyiv viewed the composer as a political symbol. Like the national democratic opposition of 1989 or the more radical strains of

[82] P. Romaniuk, "Lito piznikh zhorzhyn," *Kultura i zhyttia*, September 17, 1989.

nationalist ideology, Ivasiuk as a national symbol probably had limited appeal outside western Ukraine and Kyiv.

It seems that Ivasiuk would never again be used for political purposes to the same degree as in 1989 and would not achieve the same degree of media interest in the years before the downfall of the Soviet Union. The radicalization of opposition groups, an increasingly free sphere of public debate and the increasing focus of societal debate on explicitly political issues rather than cultural questions in 1990 and 1991 meant that Ivasiuk's legacy would be used less often to form political arguments—whether for or against the status quo in the Ukrainian SSR. Nonetheless, efforts to commemorate Ivasiuk continued in 1990 and 1991, albeit with a lower public profile. The second Chervona Ruta festival, held in the summer of 1991, would also inspire another public debate about Ivasiuk's proper place in Ukrainian collective memory.

Chapter III: The Myth of Ivasiuk in the Age of Hard Politics, 1990-91

Two trends characterized the expression of the myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk in 1990-91. First of all, the composer was less often portrayed and discussed in the media during this period. Ivasiuk and his legacy would never attain the same degree of media attention during the last two years of the Soviet Union's existence as they had in 1989. This change can be explained partly by the diminishing role of culture in popular debate. As opposition groups became radicalized and the acceptable terms of public debate continued to widen, explicitly political questions such as Ukrainian sovereignty and independence increasingly took centre stage. This process, which began around 1989, continued in 1990-91.

In western Ukraine, more explicitly nationalistic historical figures like Stepan Bandera also began to be openly commemorated during this period. While Ivasiuk continued to be widely revered, and interest in honoring the composer and determining the true circumstances of his death continued, it seems that the ideologically ambiguous composer was becoming a less useful national symbol in an increasingly radicalized political environment. The diminished media attention to Ivasiuk in 1990-91 also reflected the absence of meaningful anniversaries connected to the composer's life and death.

The composer still received some attention in the press and in public commemorations, particularly in 1991. Efforts to commemorate Ivasiuk through monuments, which had begun in previous years, continued to bear fruit during this period—two notable memorials to Ivasiuk were erected in Lviv in these years. Popular demands for further commemoration and vindication of the composer also continued, at least in Lviv. Many Lvivites expressed their desire to have a street named after Ivasiuk and called for a full investigation into his death.

The preparations for the second Chervona Ruta festival, which was held in Zaporizhzhia in August 1991, generated renewed popular interest in Ivasiuk.[1] As was the case before the 1989 festival, the second Chervona Ruta festival also sparked another debate in the media over Ivasiuk's legacy and proper place in the festival.

While Ivasiuk's legacy was less prominent in these years, the discourse on Ivasiuk which did emerge was politicized to an unprecedented degree. The increasing radicalization of Ukrainian society was reflected in the portrayals of Ivasiuk in the media and among the general public in Lviv in 1990 and 1991. By the last two years of Soviet rule, the myth of Ivasiuk was more often politicized and nationalistic than had been the case in the past. The dominant discourse on Ivasiuk by this time, which was probably embraced by much of the nationally conscious population of Ukraine, particularly in western Ukraine, posited that the composer had been a brilliant artist who preserved Ukrainian culture during the "period of stagnation," had suffered at the hands of the regime, and who may even have died as a result of the regime's actions. This narrative of Ivasiuk also stressed that the composer's work and legacy had been suppressed after his death. By 1991, some observers went farther in their characterization of Ivasiuk's significance, connecting the composer's legacy to contemporary political issues and even claiming that Ivasiuk helped to inspire the movement for Ukrainian independence. The journalist Iurii Tokariev, by contrast, would cast doubt on many aspects of the popular characterization of Ivasiuk as a genius-cum-martyr, minimizing Ivasiuk's artistic abilities to some degree and questioning whether Ivasiuk and his legacy were repressed to the degree that many claimed.

Ukrainian Society in 1990-91

The combination of economic crisis and cultural rebirth which had characterized Ukraine in 1989 continued in 1990 and 1991. The political turmoil of the period was

[1] Iurii Tokariev, " 'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.

accompanied by (and to a significant degree caused by) severe economic difficulties. The "general economic crisis" of 1990 continued in 1991, as did the miners' strikes which began in previous years.[2]

Several developments indicated that Ukrainian society was undergoing a "continuing process of social and political liberalization and national renewal" during this period. Many new periodicals were being founded, new political parties were disseminating their programs, and information about Ukrainian history and culture and Ukrainians abroad continued to be disseminated. As Nahaylo writes, "the general impression was one of a nation that had survived a severe winter and was beginning to bloom."[3] The freer ideological climate also allowed new values to be expressed through the experimentation of Ukrainians with "all manner of things which previously had been taboo or officially disapproved of," including astrology, mysticism and pornography.[4] Stella Hryniuk, who spent time in Lviv in late 1987 and late 1990, noticed an enormous change in the cultural atmosphere of the city between her two visits. She recalled that late 1990 was a time of enormous cultural ferment in Lviv. For example, a large number of new publications which were being established at the time, nearly "a [new] newspaper a month." While the Christmas tradition of *vertep* could not be practiced in 1987, in 1990 there was a *vertep* "on every corner."[5]

Political Developments

In 1990-91, the political radicalization of opposition groups and much of the population which had begun in earlier years continued and intensified. The gradual disintegration of the Soviet regime's hold on power also inspired some pragmatic Ukrainian Communists to take a more moderate national Communist stance which was closer to the

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[2] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 281, 308, 354.
[3] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 285.
[4] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 286.
[5] Interview with Stella Hryniuk, February 21, 2008.

positions of the opposition. Over the course of 1990 and 1991, moderate Communists and moderate national democrats increasingly began to pursue similar aims, with national Communists more often emphasizing the preservation of Ukrainian sovereignty, even at the cost of conflict with the authorities in Moscow.[6]

By early 1990, the idea of full independence for Ukraine, as opposed to mere sovereignty, had gained support among many Ukrainians. The "new political self-assertiveness" of the time led to increasingly overt forms of resistance to the regime. For example, students and young people began to oppose conscription and military service outside Ukraine.[7]

The national democrats did well in the elections to the Ukrainian parliament and local councils of March 1990 in the areas where they were able to nominate candidates. They won an overwhelming victory in western Ukraine and performed well in Kyiv. The election results showed that the Ukrainian national revival was strongest in Kyiv and western Ukraine but that there was also significant desire for political change in urban eastern Ukraine, although in the latter region social and economic issues were of primary concern to the population. Soon after the March elections, the national democrats began to openly embrace the cause of Ukrainian independence.[8]

In western Ukraine, "local councils began in effect to dismantle Soviet rule in their regions." Local governments in the region began flying the Ukrainian flag, returning churches under Russian Orthodox control to the Greek Catholic Church, declaring Easter a holiday, "depriving the local Party organs of the power they had held, and beginning to move in the direction of establishing elements of a mixed economy." The authorities in Kyiv were

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[6] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 324, 325, 339, 346, 347, 349, 350.
[7] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 263.
[8] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 255-57.

alarmed by these developments and attempted to restrict the power of the local governments in the western oblasts.[9]

New political parties and organizations, both radical and moderate, continued to form in 1990 and 1991. In April 1990, for example, the right-wing Ukrainian Republican Party (URP) was formed from the UHU at the urging of Viacheslav Chornovil. The URP not only supported independence but also sought the banning of the CPU.[10]

On July 16, 1990, the Ukrainian parliament voted overwhelmingly in favour of the declaration of state sovereignty of Ukraine, which included provisions stating that Ukraine's laws would have ultimate authority on Ukrainian territory. While the declaration was not binding, it did have a crucial symbolic importance. It was viewed by the opposition as a step towards independence and by the CPU as a concession which would allow the Party to retain power.[11]

In November 1990, Gorbachev introduced the draft of a new Union treaty. It essentially proposed a federation, with significant power remaining at the centre, and also had other provisions which were unappealing to Ukraine and the other republics. Gorbachev planned a referendum on a new Union treaty for March 1991 and opposition forces and national communists in Ukraine and elsewhere turned the situation to their advantage. Kravchuk proposed an additional referendum question which would ask Ukrainians "what type of a Union" they wished to join. The "Galician Assembly" which had been formed by three oblast councils in western Ukraine announced in February that it intended to add a third question about outright independence to the referendum in the three Galician oblasts, and that same month the Ukrainian parliament endorsed a question which asked citizens whether they wished to join a looser federation than the one proposed by Gorbachev.[12]

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[9] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 266.
[10] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 268, 269.
[11] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 297-299.
[12] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 332, 346, 347, 349, 350.

About 70 percent of Ukrainian voters endorsed the question formulated by the centre, but about 80 percent supported the republican question. While the proportion of voters endorsing Ukrainian sovereignty and endorsing or rejecting the Union Treaty varied by region, sovereignty was supported by the vast majority of voters throughout Ukraine. Western Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly against the Union treaty and supported their own regional question on Ukrainian independence by a wide margin.[13]

The attempt of a group of conservative Communists to preserve the USSR by seizing power on August 19 would accelerate Ukraine's move towards Ukrainian independence and lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The coup soon failed and "totally discredited" the Communist Party. After heated debates in the Ukrainian parliament, a large majority approved a declaration of independence on August 24, conditional on approval in a republican referendum on December 1. About 90 percent of Ukrainian voters (with a turnout of 84 percent) approved the declaration of independence in the referendum. Support for independence was above 80 percent (sometimes around 90 percent) even in the heavily russified regions of eastern and southern Ukraine. Even in Crimea, a slim majority of the population voted for independence. In the presidential election held concurrently with the referendum Leonid Kravchuk won by a significant margin, becoming the first president of an independent Ukraine.[14]

Cultural and Historical Issues

While the politics of Ukrainian sovereignty and independence dominated popular consciousness during this period, cultural and historical issues remained important. In western Ukraine in particular, the politics of history took an increasingly radical form.

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[13] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 350-352.
[14] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 373, 374, 383, 390, 391, 419.

Early in 1990, a notable historical commemoration by the opposition aimed to deligitimize the Soviet narrative of the Second World War or "Great Patriotic War" as a war of liberation by the Red Army which led to the "reunification" of western Ukraine with the Soviet Union. The unification of an independent Ukraine on January 22, 1919, was commemorated on the same day in 1990 through the formation of a human chain from Lviv to Kyiv, an event initiated by Rukh. The prospect of the human chain caused the Party leadership to reevaluate the standard Soviet historical interpretation of the 1918-19 period of Ukrainian independence. Leonid Kravchuk promised that there would be no official interference with the commemoration and also affirmed that that "more objective historical material about Ukraine's modern history" would soon be published. Shortly before publishing Kravchuk's conciliatory statements, the Party newspaper *Radianska Ukraina* published a two-part article by the former dissident Ivan Dziuba, which "seemed to confirm that the CPU was ready to remove the remaining blank spots" in Ukrainian history. The "Ukrainian Wave" proved to be an enormous success, attracting hundreds of thousands of participants at the very least.[15]

The commemoration of the January 1919 unification had major political significance. According to Nahaylo, "Rukh's action implicitly rejected the official Soviet line on Ukraine's modern history and the underlying aims seem to have been to legitimate both the brief period of independence and Ukraine's national symbols."[16] For Wilfried Jilge, the commemoration was "a decisive stage" in the process of delegitimizing the Soviet myth of the Second World War: "the action reminded a large part of the public that the *sobornist'* [unity] achieved in 1919 and not the 'reunification' of 1939 and 1944 could serve as the true historical and judicial argument for Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity."[17]

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[15] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 246-248.
[16] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 247.
[17] Wilfried Jilge, "The Politics of History and the Second World War in Post-Communist Ukraine (1986/1991-2004/2005)," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* NF 54, no. 1 (2006):54, 55

Historic and symbolic issues had particular importance in western Ukraine in 1990-91, as the national democrats took advantage of their control of local government to remove certain symbols of the Soviet past and replace them with Ukrainian national symbols, in some cases very controversial ones. This process began after the national democrats were elected in Lviv and the Lviv oblast in March 1990. The Lenin monument in Lviv was removed in September 1990 (the first such action in Ukraine), and the city council adopted the Ukrainian national anthem and blue and yellow flag before any other local government.[18]

In Lviv, renaming city streets also furthered the "erasure of the Soviet image of L'viv." A Committee for National and Cultural Survival was formed by the city council in 1990 and began deliberating about the renaming of streets and proposing new names to the city council. The work of the committee was influenced to a significant degree by ideological considerations: "[t]he main aim was to remove names that created a Soviet image of the city" and to replace them with historical street names which "reflected the Ukrainian character of the city," sometimes adopting non-Ukrainian street names if they were relevant to Lviv's history, were widely known and did not "offend the national pride of Ukrainians."[19]

According to Yaroslav Hrytsak and Victor Susak, "[t] he general idea was not just to create a Ukrainian image of the city but to promote a national version of Ukrainian historical memory as well." This included naming major streets in the central parts of the city after individuals who had been denounced by the Soviet regime, such as Ivan Mazepa and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi. A street was named after Hrushevskyi by the city council in 1990, before the expert committee had even begun its work. One district included several streets named after mid-twentieth century Ukrainian nationalist leaders Ievhen Konovalets, Andrii Melnyk, Stepan Bandera, and Roman Shukhevych. A committee to rename streets in Kyiv

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[18] Yaroslav Hrytsak and Victor Susak, "Constructing a National City: the Case of L'viv," in *Composing Urban History and the Constitution of Civic Identities*, ed. John J. Czaplicka and [illegible] A. Ruble (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 151.
[19] Hrytsak and Susak, "Constructing a National City," 151, 152.

was also formed shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Its work proceeded much more slowly than in Lviv, however, and the new names which were eventually chosen had much less significance for the Ukrainian national cause than those in Lviv.[20]

As will be mentioned in greater detail below, many Lvivites wanted a street to be named after Volodymyr Ivasiuk at this time, but this would not occur until 1992.[21] Perhaps this can be seen as a sign that, for all his popularity and symbolic importance, Ivasiuk was a minor national symbol compared to more prominent figures such as Mykhailo Hrushevskyi and Stepan Bandera.

The commemoration of nationalist leaders who opposed Soviet rule during the 1940s and had been denounced as "bandits" and "bourgeois nationalists" by the regime, as well as the removal of Soviet monuments, provoked alarm among the authorities in Kyiv. Monuments to Ukrainian nationalists Stepan Bandera, Ievhen Konovalets, and the Waffen-SS Galicia Division (a Second World War German military unit formed by a wing of the OUN) were destroyed with explosives in December 1990 and June 1991. It was alleged that the KGB was responsible.[22] The removal of Lenin monuments in western Ukraine led to conflict between Communists and national democrats in the national parliament as well.[23] Efforts to add Ukrainian nationalist symbols to the landscape and remove their Soviet counterparts also contributed to the polarization of Ukrainian society. The commemoration of the OUN-UPA and the reintroduction of the Ukrainian national symbols generated hostility among some ordinary Ukrainians, especially among the russophone population of eastern and southern Ukraine. For many of the people of these regions, the *tryzub* and blue and yellow flag were

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[20] Hrytsak and Susak, "Constructing a National City," 153, 157.
[21] Ilko Lemko, "Prohulianka z okolytsiamy," *Lvivska Hazeta*, July 13, 2007. <<http://www.gazeta.lviv.ua/articles/2007/07/13/24757/>>. Accessed March 5, 2008.
[22] Hrytsak and Susak, "Constructing a National City," 155.
[23] Nahaylo, *Ukrainian Resurgence*, 303.

associated with the Banderites (a faction of the OUN led by Stepan Bandera), "and above all with an aggressive, anti-Russian nationalist ideology."[24]

According to Wilfried Jilge, the commemoration of the OUN-UPA and removal of Soviet monuments in western Ukraine during this period represented a radical rejection of the Soviet historical narrative of the "Great Patriotic War" and an overt challenge to the territorial integrity of the Soviet Union.[25]

Commemorative Activities in Lviv

Although Volodymyr Ivasiuk received very little attention in the media in 1990, Lvivites continued to commemorate the composer. A monument was finally erected on Ivasiuk's grave in Lviv in the spring of 1990 and popular opinion in Lviv indicated a desire to name a street after Ivasiuk and once again investigate the composer's death. Iurii Kril, a correspondent for *Komsomolskoe znamia*, addressed the long-delayed completion of Ivasiuk's grave marker in a June 1990 article with the pointed title "Pamiatnik cherez 11 let" ("A monument after eleven years."). According to Kril, in the past many visitors to the Lychakiv cemetery in Lviv asked their hosts to show them Volodymyr Ivasiuk's grave. The journalist claimed that he had seen how disappointed visitors to the cemetery became when they noticed that there was no gravestone to mark the composer's resting place. The bronze monument was designed and constructed by the Lviv sculptors Mykola Pasykyra and Liubomyr Iaremchuk, in collaboration with the architect Mykhailo Fedyk. Ivasiuk was depicted as an eighteen-year old who was about to achieve fame and prestige, as this was the preference of his parents.[26]

Kril's article on the monument also described Ivasiuk's achievements and the difficulties he faced during his life. According to Kril, the monument depicted Ivasiuk "as if

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[24] Jilge, "Politics of History," 55.
[25] Jilge, "Politics of History," 56.
[26] Iu. Kril, "Pamiatnik cherez 11 let," *Komsomolskoe znamia*, June 12, 1990.

he were preparing to take off." Ivasiuk did indeed fly to heights which were unheard of for a Ukrainian composer of *estradna pisnia*. However, "envious persons" (*zavistniki*) and "heartless cultural bureaucrats" (*bezdushnye chinovniki ot'kultury*), wishing to take revenge on Ivasiuk for his popularity, gossiped about the composer, "spun webs of all kinds of (*vsevozmozhnye*) intrigues" around his name, and spread "horrible rumours." "Even the death of Volodia was presented in dark tones" by these individuals." Kril noted that not a single Lviv newspaper had published an obituary for the composer, let alone a detailed account of the circumstances of Ivasiuk's death in the spring of 1979. By contrast, "in order to slander (*ochernit)* the death of V. Ivasiuk," the statement of the Lviv oblast prosecutor's office explained Ivasiuk's death as a suicide resulting from mental illness. For years after Ivasiuk's death, according to Kril, the composer's name was spoken with suspicion (*proiznosilos s podozreniiam*) in official circles, the performance of the composer's works was forbidden, and "all kinds of slanders" (*vsevozmozhnye navety*) were spread about Ivasiuk.[27]

Kril noted that many people were interested in the truth of Ivasiuk's death and that "gossip" about the poet continued to be widespread: "[e]ven today, when the conversation turns to Ivasiuk, many people are interested, saying, 'is it true that they tortured him to death?'... And many perpetrators are named, including fully legal organizations and "informal organizations," as we would call them today."[28] Kril's reference to both legal and "informal" organizations being blamed for Ivasiuk's death may be a reference to the rumours about Ivasiuk's death cited in Chapter I—that Ukrainian nationalists and the security services were among the suggested perpetrators of the composer's death.

As a result of the continuing uncertainty and rumours surrounding the death of the composer, as of early 1990 many people in Lviv were calling for the creation of an independent commission to investigate the circumstances of Ivasiuk's death. Kril believed

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[27] Kril, "Pamiatnik cherez 11 let."
[28] Kril, "Pamiatnik cherez 11 let."

that the formation of such a commission would be a positive development: "People want to know the truth, no matter what the truth may be..."[29]

A poem which appeared in the newspaper of the Lviv oblast council in 1990 also reflected popular desire to commemorate Ivasiuk by naming a street after the composer. A poem by Iaroslav Hasiuk with the title of a street which did not yet exist ("Volodymyr Ivasiuk Street") was published in *Frankova Krynytsia* in November 1990. The poem laments the composer's death and ends with the lines: "Sow the red rue along the road, o people / So his memory will not be forgotten!"[30] An organized campaign to name a street after Ivasiuk was in progress as of the summer of 1991. *Kultura i zhyttia* reported on August 10, 1991 that the residents of the Lychakiv *raion* (district) in Lviv were collecting signatures in support of renaming the street where Ivasiuk had lived after "their favourite singer."[31]

Despite the continuing efforts to memorialize Ivasiuk in Lviv in 1990, it appears that he had lost some of his importance as a political symbol by this time. Michael Savaryn, a Canadian who lived in Lviv for several months in 1990, heard accounts from local political activists of earlier commemorations at Ivasiuk's grave serving as a form of covert (albeit still somewhat risky) resistance to the regime. By 1990, however, when the expression of open political dissent had advanced to the degree that Communist Party representatives and their accoutrements were being physically expelled from factories, it was no longer necessary to use commemoration of Ivasiuk as a pretext for the expression of political dissent.[32]

For nationally conscious individuals in Lviv, the changing political situation diminished Ivasiuk's role as a useful symbol. Remembering the composer was sometimes a form of semi-covert resistance to the regime during the years after his death, and Ivasiuk's legacy was used very openly for political purposes in 1989. By 1990 Ivasiuk was still a

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[29] Kril, "Pamiatnik cherez 11 let."
[30] Iaroslav Hasiuk, "Vulytsia Volodymyra Ivasiuka," *Frankova Krynytsia*, November 21, 1990.
[31] "Imeni Ivasiuka," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.
[32] Information provided by Michael Savaryn, January 30, 2008.

widely revered figure, one whom many Lvivites thought should be commemorated with a street name, and there was a widespread desire to know the true circumstances of his death. However, Ivasiuk's relevance for the contemporary situation receded somewhat after 1989, as more explicitly political and economic issues occupied more and more of the population's attention and unambiguously nationalist symbols like Stepan Bandera could be openly discussed and commemorated.

However, when Lvivites made reference to Ivasiuk as a symbol in 1991, they did so in a much more openly politicized manner than in the past. This was evident in the commemoration which took place in Lviv in August 1991, when a memorial plaque was unveiled on the apartment building where the composer had lived. An unsigned article published in *Kultura i zhyttia* on August 10, 1991, reported on the progress of efforts to memorialize Ivasiuk and also served as another example of the increasing politicization of Ivasiuk's commemoration by this time, even in the official press. The article noted that Ivasiuk was now viewed by many as a harbinger (*provisnyk*) of national rebirth in the "notorious times of stagnation (*sumnopamiatni zastiini chasy*)" of the Brezhnev period. While the circumstances of Ivasiuk's death remained a mystery at the time of writing, the author clearly believed that the composer's demise resulted from his role as a prominent Ukrainian artist: "It is clear only that someone was frightened to death by (*kohos smertelno liakaly*) the lyrical songs which were sung throughout the world, reminding the world that there is such a country as Ukraine and that its culture exists." According to *Kultura i zhyttia*, Ivasiuk was now returning to Ukrainians through commemorations and performance of his work: "His memory lives in festivals, in songs, in works dedicated to him and in many hearts." For the author of the article, the ceremony which accompanied the unveiling of the plaque was a sign of the widespread love for Ivasiuk. One of those who spoke at this event was the parliamentarian, prominent opposition activist and former political prisoner Bohdan

Horyn, who asserted in his speech that the truth about Ivasiuk's death would eventually be revealed.[33]

The poet and Ivasiuk collaborator Bohdan Stelmakh's recollections of the unveiling of the plaque, which were published in 1996, gave Ivasiuk explicitly political significance as a martyr of the Soviet regime. Stelmakh noted that the memory of Ivasiuk among Ukrainians was being strengthened during the summer of 1991, in part through the installation of a memorial plaque in Lviv. He also described the array of individuals, many of them artists and musicians, who were present at the event, and claimed that together they were members of a people, who were, like Ivasiuk, the victims of Soviet repression and were finally gaining their freedom:

> ...a people (*narod*) which is finally freeing itself from the accursed (*kliati*) imperial shackles, which long suffocated us, and first and foremost, artists...because they were the conscience and consciousness of the nation. Volodia Ivasiuk was also murdered in these shackles. But the shackles did not overpower his song.[34]

Another notable commemorative event of 1991 was the release of the documentary film "Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Melodiia," the first such film about the composer. The premiere of the film took place in Chernivtsi on Ivasiuk's birthday (March 4), and Taras Unhurian, who wrote the script of the film along with Mykhailo Ivasiuk, claimed that this was the first time that Volodymyr Ivasiuk's birthday was officially recognized.[35]

Leszek Mazepa, who had served as Ivasiuk's professor at the Lviv conservatory of music, was interviewed in the film and portrayed the late composer as a prominent national symbol who inspired the movement for Ukrainian independence:

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[33] "Imeni Ivasiuka," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.
[34] Bohdan Stelmakh, *Zaprosy mene u sny svoi* (Lviv: Spolom, 2006), 24.
[35] Taras Unhurian, *Monoloh pered oblychchiam brata* (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi tsentr "Prosvita," 2003), 64, 65.

> The liberation movement (*vyzvolnyi rukh*) for the independence of the state (*derzhava*) always requires certain authority figures (*avtorytety*). Taras Shevchenko was a national prophet for us all. Volodymyr Ivasiuk became a national symbol. Having died a violent death..., Volodia, sacrificed himself, as it were, for his own people (*niby prynis sebe v zhertvu svoiemu narodovi*). And for this reason he became a symbol.[36]

Mazepa's description of Ivasiuk's importance is notable for several reasons. First of all, the academic ties Ivasiuk to the movement for Ukrainian independence. By this time, at least for some nationally conscious individuals in Lviv, Ivasiuk was not merely a talented artist who died in tragic circumstances or an example of dedication to the Ukrainian people. Rather, the late composer served as symbolic inspiration for Ukrainian attempts to win independence from the Soviet Union. Ivasiuk is also mentioned along with Taras Shevchenko, one of the most important Ukrainian national symbols. Mazepa's account explicitly describes Ivasiuk as a national symbol and a martyr, something which is usually only implied by other observers.

The Second Chervona Ruta Festival Inspires More Debate

Like the first Chervona Ruta music festival, the second festival, held in the eastern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia in August 1991, would have major political and cultural significance. The decision to hold the festival in the heavily Russified city of Zaporizhzhia was in part a result of the growing weakness of the Soviet state; the organizers saw late 1991 as an opportune moment to bring their message of Ukrainian national revival to a stronghold of the Russian language and the Communist Party. The Zaporizhzhia region also had important symbolic significance as the historic homeland of the Zaporozhian Cossacks,

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[36] Quoted in Unhurian, *Monoloh*, 49.

whose quasi-independent state and battles against foreign rule served as an inspiration for nationally conscious late twentieth-century Ukrainians.[37]

The festival was an attempt to use the universal appeal of music to bring the national message to non-Ukrainians and russified Ukrainians. Music, particularly the music of Ivasiuk, could appeal to russified Ukrainians and also to Russians, Jews or other non-Ukrainians and secure their cooperation. Through the "intercultural allure of music, the festival provided the possibility of extending membership in the Ukrainian nation to Russians, Jews, and Russified Ukrainians—all of whom knew by heart the words to the famous song "Chervona Ruta."[38] Displays of anti-Soviet and Ukrainian nationalist sentiment were prominent at the festival as well—a large number of blue and yellow flags were prominently displayed by members of the audience, many of whom shouted "nationalist slogans and denunciations of the Soviet regime."[39]

The 1991 festival was another notable example of a new understanding of the past being constructed during the late Soviet era. According to Wanner, the festival "became a site of transmission of an unofficial past, a past that glorified Ukraine and its suffering under Soviet rule."[40]

Like the first Chervona Ruta festival, the festival in Zaporizhzhia was also an attempt to discredit the idea that Ukrainian culture was antiquated, stagnant and not capable of adapting itself to the late twentieth century. Performances by rock groups who sang in Ukrainian undermined the common stereotype that Ukrainian culture was "interminably locked into its peasant origins."[41]

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[37] Catherine Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage: Music and Change in Soviet Ukraine," in *Retuning Culture: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Mark Slobin. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996, 137, 138.
[38] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 138.
[39] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 141.
[40] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 136.
[41] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 139, 140.

Braty Hadiukiny (the Viper Brothers) were one of the most popular bands at the 1991 festival. Their lyrics were openly critical of russification and Sovietization and addressed such controversial topics as western Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalism." Chervona Ruta also featured folk performers from the Ukrainian diaspora who represented older musical traditions.[42] Many of the winners of the first festival also performed in Zaporizhzhia, including Vasyl Zhdankin, Viktor Morozov, Andrii Panchyshyn, Mariia Burmaka and "Sestrychka Vika," as well as the rock group "Komu vnyz." A number of new artists were represented at the festival. While there was no first prize in the pop music category, the Lviv band Plich-o-Plich won the second prize. The rock group Tabula Rasa from Kyiv won the first prize in the rock category and the Lviv band Plach Ieremii won third prize. The Lviv rock group Mertvyi Piven won first prize in the singer or bard (*spivets*) category.[43]

The festival ended on August 18, 1991, the day before the abortive coup by Party conservatives in Moscow which eventually caused the collapse of the Soviet Union and Ukraine's declaration of independence on August 24. Wanner argues that the 1991 Chervona Ruta festival was "the last event orchestrated by Ukrainian nationalist groups in an oppositional mode to Soviet rule."[44]

Debate Over Ivasiuk's Place in the Festival

The debate over the importance of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's music in the Chervona Ruta festival which took place in 1989 was repeated in the months before the 1991 festival. Ivan Lepsha was again a prominent critic of the festival organizers. Lepsha and Olha Rutkovska supported the *estradna pisnia* style pioneered by Ivasiuk and believed the composer's music should be a more prominent element of the festival. The festival organizers argued that the

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[42] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 141, 142.
[43] Antin Kuzelia, " 'Chervona Ruta:' vid Chernivtsiv do Zaporizhzhia," *Literaturna Ukraina*, September 5, 1991.
[44] Wanner, "Nationalism on Stage," 138.

festival should be dedicated largely to showcasing newer artists and styles, and not simply to paying homage to Ivasiuk and his musical collaborators and descendants, a view supported by Iurii Tokariev. This debate also involved the commemoration of Ivasiuk: those on each side of the dispute insisted that their own desired approach to the festival would be a more "proper" commemoration of the composer.

Controversy first arose during the tour of the Lviv oblast in early 1991 which was to select festival participants from the region. The Lviv Club of Creative Youth (KTM--*Klub tvorchoi molodi*), which was named after Volodymyr Ivasiuk and which organized the oblast tour, was criticized for supporting the older *estradna pisnia* style pioneered by Ivasiuk rather than seeking to promote newer styles. The Lviv academic and member of the festival organizing committee Anatolii Kalenychenko criticized the KTM in *Molod Ukrainy*, arguing that the music of the 1970s and early 1980s was more appropriate for middle-aged people than for the young. For Kalenychenko, imitating the style of Ivasiuk was not a proper form of commemoration. Instead, because Ivasiuk had a revolutionary impact on music in his own time, a more appropriate homage to the composer would be a "revolutionary explosion in music, that is, the same kind of fundamental reforms which [Ivasiuk] created in his own time."[45]

A longer article written by Kalenychenko and other members of the festival organizing committee reiterated their commitment to forging a new path for Ukrainian popular music rather than being overly dependent on foreign styles or continuing the style of Ivasiuk and *estradna pisnia*. While praising Ivasiuk and his revolutionary contribution to Ukrainian music, the organizers argued that "[e]very epoch needs new melodies and rhythms. The songs of the past cannot excite our youth..."[46]

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[45] "Vyvykhnuti proty nevyvykhnutykh," *Molod Ukrainy*, May 24, 1991.
[46] Taras Melnyk, Anatolii Kalenychenko, and Ivan Malkovych, "Vid 'Chervonoi ruty'—do idealu," *Kultura i zhyttia*, May 18, 1991.

Ivan Lepsha, who in late 1987 had provided the inspiration for the first festival and begun the process of restoring Volodymyr Ivasiuk's reputation, took the opposite view with regard to the proper commemoration of the composer. In response to the festival organizers' summary of the aims of the festival, including its focus on new, popular music, Lepsha complained that the second Chervona Ruta festival, like the first festival, would focus too much on contemporary music and too little on the legacy of Volodymyr Ivasiuk.[47]

Lepsha criticized the organizers of the second festival because there would once again be no competition for the best performance of Ivasiuk's songs. He also suggested that the artists who had performed Ivasiuk's songs in the past should be invited to the festival, both as performers and as honourary guests. An evening devoted to performances of Ivasiuk's songs by the artists who had made his songs famous would be an appropriate commemoration of the composer—a true "wreath of glory." Lepsha conceded that the festival organizers were not receptive to this proposal, which had already been suggested in the past. The organizers, he lamented, "see [the festival] as simply a survey of the youth song (*pisennyi*) avant-garde." Lepsha argued that the under-representation of Ivasiuk's music at the festival was undermining the original purpose of Chervona Ruta, asking, "are we not losing the meaning (*posviata*) of 'Chervona Ruta?'"[48]

In response to Lepsha's criticism, Iurii Tokariev sided with the festival organizers. The journalist, who had met Ivasiuk and thus belonged to an older generation which might be expected to be more sympathetic to Ivasiuk's musical style, agreed with the organizers that holding a competition for the best performance of Ivasiuk's music would be "inexpedient." Tokariev argued that such a contest might provoke a reaction in the audience which is "the exact opposite of the one desired," perhaps meaning that the audience would not be excited by the performance of songs in Ivasiuk's older style. Instead, Tokariev suggested that the

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[47] Ivan Lepsha, "Sviato bez posviaty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, July 27, 1991.
[48] Lepsha, "Sviato bez posviaty."

renaissance in Ukrainian popular music achieved by Ivasiuk should serve as an inspiration to the current generation.[49]

Olha Rutkovska, who had commented on Ivasiuk and the first festival in an ethnographic journal in 1990, echoed Lepsha's position in her response to Iurii Tokariev in the pages of *Kultura i zhyttia*. She argued that a contest for the best performance of Ivasiuk's music should be added to the festival and that this would be an important step towards the proper appreciation of the composer and his work after the discrediting of Ivasiuk during and after his life.[50]

For Ivan Lepsha and Olha Rutkovska, the commemoration of Volodymyr Ivasiuk and his music should have been a crucial element of the festival. The festival organizers, however, continued to be less interested in honouring Ivasiuk than in advancing new genres of Ukrainian music. Thus although Ivasiuk was revered by many in 1990-91, not all prominent cultural figures were interested in celebrating his music at length in an important forum like the Chervona Ruta festivals.

It appears that Ivasiuk and his music were less prominent in the 1991 festival than was the case two years earlier in Chernivtsi. The kinds of commemorative activities--the memorial plaque ceremony and concert and exhibits dedicated to Ivasiuk--which accompanied the first festival were apparently not repeated in Zaporizhzhia. There was one commemorative event connected with the festival which took place earlier in the year, however. Not surprisingly, this event occurred in Chernivtsi oblast, where Ivasiuk was particularly revered. At the end of the oblast-level Chervona Ruta festival in Chernivtsi oblast in March 1991 (which would choose the performers to be sent to the main festival in Zaporizhzhia), a commemorative concert was held in honour of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. However, like some earlier commemorations of Ivasiuk in 1989, this event was criticized by

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[49] Iurii Tokariev, " 'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.
[50] O. Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 17, 1991.

the media for technical problems and the poor quality of the performances. According to the Chernivtsi newspaper *Chas*, only the recollections of Ivasiuk by his friends and family which were featured in the program made the evening at all worthwhile.[51]

The Myth of Ivasiuk on the Eve of Independence

The same press accounts from 1991 which demonstrated a divide between cultural commentators over Volodymyr Ivasiuk's proper place in the festival also offered differing interpretations of the composer's broader cultural and political significance. Iurii Tokariev's article in *Kultura i zhyttia,* in addition to opposing Lepsha's calls for a more prominent role for Ivasiuk's music in the 1991 festival, also addressed the broader questions of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's place in history, his artistic significance, and the appropriate attitude of perestroika-era Ukrainian society towards Ivasiuk. While Tokariev was sympathetic towards Ivasiuk and his legacy, his August 1991 article, "'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty," took a critical view of the myth of Ivasiuk as expressed by many other journalists and cultural figures. The article also had the overall effect of minimizing Ivasiuk's artistic and historical importance. This stance may be interpreted as a reaction to the efforts to transform Ivasiuk into a major national hero, both by virtue of his artistic accomplishments and his supposed martyrdom, which had intensified during the previous few years.

Tokariev first sought to minimize Ivasiuk's artistic accomplishments, noting that the composer was not officially the author of many of the popular songs with which he had been identified, but that in practice these songs were tied to the memory of Ivasiuk. Moreover, not all of Ivasiuk's works had equal artistic value, a fact the composer himself admitted during his life.[52]

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[51] Vasyl Kozhelianko, "Pisnia—na chatakh ukrainskoho sertsia," *Chas*, March 29, 1991.
[52] Iurii Tokariev, " 'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.

The journalist also took aim at the myth of Ivasiuk as a martyr of the Soviet regime of the "period of stagnation." Tokariev described the hostility the composer faced from some quarters, including the efforts of some individuals who were jealous of Ivasiuk's success during the 1970s to sabotage his career. According to Tokariev, the Union of Composers of Ukraine also attempted to prevent Ivasiuk's music from reaching a wide audience. Nonetheless, a number of performers such as Sofia Rotaru were successful in popularizing Ivasiuk's music by performing it themselves, and other figures in the cultural industry were also committed to promoting Ivasiuk's work. Tokariev pointed out that during the composer's life there were films, radio and television programs, exhibits, records and songbooks dedicated to Ivasiuk's music. While Ivasiuk was the victim of jealousy on the part of some cultural figures and of attempts to discredit him for being an independent composer, Tokariev argued that it was not clear that Ivasiuk was truly the victim of a repressive Soviet regime. Thus one could not categorically state that a "complete silencing (*zamovchuvannia*)" of Ivasiuk's work took place during his life "which would make the composer the victim of an unjust society."[53] In this view, those who portrayed Ivasiuk as a true victim of the regime were stretching the truth.

Tokariev also took issue with the claims of many observers that Ivasiuk's work was essentially "silenced" after the composer's death. While the Soviet bureaucracy did suppress the broadcast of Ivasiuk's music immediately after his disappearance and before the circumstances of his death were known, Tokariev suggests that this was probably "unnecessary vigilance" on the part of radio and television workers. The latter were simply protecting themselves by not airing Ivasiuk's music until the circumstances of his death had been announced and the official reaction determined. However, claims that the composer's work was thoroughly suppressed by the regime after this short period in 1979 were exaggerated, according to Tokariev: "...the work of Ivasiuk was not 'tabooed' to such a

[53] Iurii Tokariev, "'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 10, 1991.

degree that there was even one forbidden song whose premiere occurred at the [1989] 'Chervona Ruta' festival..." Tokariev added that if certain Ivasiuk compositions were rarely performed or broadcast, this was sometimes because the audience had tired of the song in question or because it was simply not very popular. The fact that some songs were not often heard was not necessarily the result of official efforts to suppress the composer's music.[54]

The journalist also argued that few individuals had been willing to take a critical view of Ivasiuk in recent years because "[p]eople say good things or nothing about the dead." For Tokariev, Ivasiuk was a talented artist who lost faith in his own abilities and who became depressed, and this depression would play "a fatal role." Tokariev also claimed that after Ivasiuk's death, the composer was adopted by certain individuals for their own political purposes. He recalled visiting the Lychakiv cemetery in 1980 but being unable to approach Ivasiuk's grave because of the many people who had gathered there, apparently more for political protest than for mourning: "The approach to the grave was blocked by rallies (*mitynhy*) with fervent, but insincere speeches by some people, whose grief was calculated (*pokazne*) and loud (*netykhe*)." Tokariev expressed his annoyance at reading "empty reminiscences" by people who did not really understand Ivasiuk ("*khto do puttia ne znav Volodymyra*"). What the journalist found most intolerable, however, was "a campaign which makes [Ivasiuk] a martyr of the KGB or some other political forces" in the same manner as the Russian singer Vladimir Vysotskii was transformed into a political martyr in order to sell merchandise related to the dead artist. In sum, Tokariev argued that "[f]or those who truly mourn a person who freely left this life (*pishla u vichnist*), a political "happening" instead of grief is not necessary."[55]

In this view, those who portrayed Ivasiuk as a martyr or exaggerated his artistic significance were not interested in properly mourning Ivasiuk as he was—a talented but

[54] Tokariev, "'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty."
[55] Tokariev, "'Khepeninh' zamist skorboty."

flawed artist whose life and death had little political significance. Instead, they wished to use the composer and his death for their own political purposes without regard for the facts of his life and death. Tokariev's arguments suggest, as does the evidence provided in Chapter I, that the process of converting Ivasiuk into a national hero began in Lviv soon after the composer's death and merely intensified and was more widely disseminated during the *perestroika* era. Not surprisingly, Tokariev's article prompted a critical response from a defender of the myth of Ivasiuk, Olha Rutkovska.

Rutkovska's reply to Tokariev, "Teper ioho slava mitsna" ("Now his glory is strong"), was published in *Kultura i zhyttia* one week after Tokariev's article. She attacked Tokariev in part by equating his criticisms of Ivasiuk and the cult of the composer with earlier smear campaigns against Ivasiuk perpetrated by some members of the Soviet cultural establishment. She also suggested that every time a Chervona Ruta festival approached, this seemed to cause Ivasiuk's spirit to descend to earth and alarm "those who know, and are silent, about where his final path lay." For Rutkovska, Tokariev's article added few new facts or insights to the debate and essentially supported those who tried to silence Ivasiuk's music and discredit the composer, rather than trying to uncover the truth about his death.[56]

Rutkovska dedicated particular attention to attacking Tokariev's claims that Ivasiuk was depressed and that the artistic value of his work was uneven.[57] Both these themes are important in the process of making Ivasiuk a national symbol. The question of Ivasiuk's mental health is significant for two reasons. First, any recognition that Ivasiuk was perhaps insecure, depressed, or otherwise imperfect detracts from his potential value as a national hero. Ivasiuk's mental state in the time before his death is also tied to the crucial question of his death. If the composer was indeed depressed, the official claims that he committed suicide are given more credibility. Second, if Ivasiuk was not depressed, this casts doubt on claims

[56] O. Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna," *Kultura i zhyttia*, August 17, 1991.
[57] Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna."

that his death was self-inflicted, and adds credibility to the theory that he was killed by the security services, further strengthening his position as a martyr and a hero. Ivasiuk's symbolic importance (and the resulting prestige he could bring to the Ukrainian people) is also tied to a large degree to his artistic achievements. Therefore, any attempt to call into question the composer's importance as an artist might undermine his usefulness as a symbol.

While Tokariev argued that Ivasiuk's artistic significance had been exaggerated, Rutkovska countered that Ivasiuk's work was so complex that the public had only begun to comprehend it. She wrote that while "we have come to our senses (*skhamenulysia*) and begun honour" Ivasiuk, it was still necessary to "understand (*zbahnuty*) and appreciate (*osmyslyty*) the artist's work in all its fullness and complexity (*bahatohrannist*)."[58]

Unlike Tokariev, who criticized many commemorations of Ivasiuk as insincere and politically motivated, Rutkovska praised efforts to commemorate Ivasiuk and viewed these activities as part of the path to discovering the true circumstances of the composer's death. According to Rutkovska, "[t]he spirit of Ivasiuk, imbued (*napoienyi*) with the strength of national dignity (*hidnist*) and defiance (*nepokory*)...is breaking the obstacles on the path to the search for the true cause of his death." She identified the opening of the memorial plaque for the composer in Lviv on August 6, 1991, as one sign of this process. The popular demands that the street in Lviv where Ivasiuk lived during his last years be renamed after the artist were another indication that the obstacles to a true account of the composer's death were being removed.[59]

Rutkovska viewed the proper commemoration of Ivasiuk and appreciation of his music as rectifying the injustice of the past:

> Everyone who knew Ivasiuk has been left with a feeling of guilt before his talent and fate. That they could not save him. That they did not do all they could towards the cleansing of his good name *(svitla pamiat)* from the muck *(mul)* of rumours, slanders, and gossip and towards the proper appreciation of

[58] Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna."
[59] Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna."

this outstanding phenomenon on the landscape (*teren*) of Ukrainian musical culture of the twentieth century.[60]

For Rutkovska, Ivasiuk's tragic fate was also a useful reminder of the oppression suffered by Ukrainians: "The tragic fate of the artist, like that of the lost national treasures, is our naked conscience."[61]

Conclusion

During the last two years of the Soviet regime, the myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk simultaneously became more politicized and lost some of its political utility and prominence. On one hand, Ivasiuk remained a popular figure and efforts to commemorate the composer in the built environment of Lviv continued, including a campaign to include Ivasiuk in the process of renaming streets. Accounts of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's importance which were published in the press or in later reminiscences of the era were even more openly political than had been the case in the past. For some Lvivites at least, Volodymyr Ivasiuk's legacy was explicitly tied to the increasingly radical political activism of the time, including the movement for Ukrainian independence.

At the same time, it seems that Ivasiuk the political symbol had been left behind by political developments to some degree. While Ivasiuk's ambiguous political status made commemoration of the composer a useful pretext for the expression of political dissent in earlier years, when the state had firmer ideological control, by 1990 political dissent could be expressed openly. At a time when the local authorities in western Ukraine were beginning to dismantle elements of the Soviet regime in their region and openly commemorate polarizing nationalist figures, Ivasiuk was something of a relic of an earlier era when criticism of the regime had to

[60] Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna."
[61] Rutkovska, "A teper ioho slava mitsna."

be expressed under the guise of environmental or cultural activism. By 1990, the composer was becoming simply another (albeit much-loved) figure in the Ukrainian national pantheon.

An examination of the sources from this period also suggests that Ivasiuk's legacy, which because of its ambiguity could be appropriated for various ideological ends in earlier years, was now largely the property of nationally conscious, often very nationalistic Ukrainians. The pro-Soviet or tentatively nationalistic accounts of Ivasiuk which were published in earlier years appeared to be absent by 1990. Ivasiuk was now firmly a Ukrainian national hero and this depiction was not leavened with any claims of Ivasiuk's internationalism or pan-Soviet appeal. This chapter has focused on Lviv and debates in the republican press, thus reflecting mostly the views of Lvivites and some intellectuals from Kyiv or other regions. One can only speculate on the nature of the myth of Ivasiuk in other regions and sectors of the population. Considering the hostility or indifference of many eastern and southern Ukrainians towards Ukrainian nationalism, it is likely that Ivasiuk remained a largely apolitical figure in these regions.

CONCLUSION

During his life Volodymyr Ivasiuk achieved enormous fame and popularity in Ukraine, throughout the Soviet Union and beyond as a composer and occasional performer of the style of Soviet pop music known as *estradna pisnia*. Although he won several major prizes, Ivasiuk was denied official recognition of his talents on a few occasions, faced hostility from cultural figures who envied his success, and may have been harassed by the KGB. As an artist who used the Ukrainian language and achieved great success, Ivasiuk was a rarity in Brezhnev-era Ukraine. Ivasiuk's unique achievements made him a hero for nationally conscious Ukrainians at a time when Ukrainian culture received little respect from the authorities and was sometimes subject to repression. Ivasiuk's status also meant that the composer was somewhat suspect to the Soviet regime. The composer achieved his success by composing and performing in Ukrainian at a time when official rhetoric often called for the creation of a united "Soviet people" whose language would be Russian. Furthermore, Ivasiuk was popular despite the fact that he was never completely co-opted by the regime. Nonetheless, despite the hostility Ivasiuk encountered from some representatives of the state, he was never subjected to such forms of overt political repression as arrest, trial or imprisonment, and it seems that the composer never engaged in dissident activity. In fact, Ivasiuk was a member of the Komsomol and sometimes contributed to works which were overtly pro-Soviet.

Thus Ivasiuk occupied an ambiguous position during his life—like many people in the USSR, he was neither a dissident nor an ideal Soviet citizen. After his tragic and mysterious death in 1979, many people in Lviv blamed the KGB for Ivasiuk's death, and the composer's funeral became a forum for voicing political discontent. Just as Ivasiuk had been a symbol of Ukrainian cultural achievement during his life, after his death the composer served as a reminder of the Soviet state's attack on Ukrainian culture. Commemoration of Ivasiuk became a focus for discontent with the Soviet regime in Lviv and was even associated

with explicitly nationalist activity. Ivasiuk continued to be clandestinely commemorated in Lviv in the years after his death.

In later years, several observers would claim that after Ivasiuk's death in 1979 bureaucrats from the Ministry of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR attempted to silence the composer's music, prohibiting its performance, and that the authorities carried out a smear campaign against Ivasiuk, although these claims were called into question by at least one journalist. It is clear, in any event, that Ivasiuk received very little coverage in the media in the years between 1979 and 1988, and therefore it appears that he was viewed with some suspicion by the regime. In at least one case (that of Sofiia Rotaru), a performer who had popularized Ivasiuk's songs stopped performing them after 1979. The local authorities in Lviv clearly discouraged the commemoration of Ivasiuk, at least during the period immediately following his death.

Probably the most crucial figure in the campaign to properly commemorate Ivasiuk and restore the composer's reputation which began during the Gorbachev era was his father, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, who later claimed that he had been working throughout the 1980s to restore his son's "good name." In 1987, the elder Ivasiuk published his lengthy recollections of his son in several periodicals. Late in the same year, Ivan Lepsha called for the creation of a music festival in Ivasiuk's honour.

Efforts to commemorate and "rehabilitate" the composer gained momentum in 1988. Many readers of *Literaturna Ukraina* called for Ivasiuk to be awarded Ukraine's highest cultural award, and some made reference to the need for Ivasiuk's "rehabilitation," although, as the newspaper's editors pointed out, Ivasiuk had never been overtly repressed by the state in the first place. Rostyslav Bratun, one of Ivasiuk's collaborators and another prominent figure in the campaign to memorialize the composer, also called in 1988 for Ivasiuk to be honoured. That same year, in the first tangible sign that the campaign for recognition and

"rehabilitation" was having success, Ivasiuk was posthumously awarded a Komsomol prize which he had been unfairly denied during his life.

In 1989, the media devoted even more attention to Ivasiuk as the result of the anniversaries of his life and death and the execution of the first Chervona Ruta music festival in the composer's honour in the fall of the same year. The increasingly prominent efforts of Bratun, Mykhailo Ivasiuk and others to restore the reputation of the composer took place in the context of widespread popular interest in reexamining Ukrainian history and rehabilitating other forgotten or repressed historical figures such as Mykola Skrypnyk and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi.

The prominence of Ivasiuk in 1989, especially in Lviv, was both a reflection of a widespread interest in culture and the focus of much political activism on cultural issues and of the tactics used by opposition activists in a transitional political situation. Ivasiuk was clearly used as a political symbol in Lviv during this period, a phenomenon which had begun immediately after his death. At a time when the political climate was becoming more hospitable to the expression of dissent but when Ukrainians were still reluctant to openly air their political grievances, preferring instead to focus on activities such as cultural activism, the commemoration of a popular and fairly uncontroversial composer was a way to express dissent without taking the risk of openly challenging the authorities.

By the summer of 1989, commemorations of Ivasiuk in Lviv had become so boisterous that one journalist wondered if the truth of Ivasiuk's life and legacy were being forgotten in the rush to transform the composer into a national symbol. The Chervona Ruta festival was a very prominent event which was held in Ivasiuk's honour and which incorporated specific commemorations of the composer. Nonetheless, some critics complained that there was too little of Ivasiuk's music in the festival itself, an objection they would repeat two years later at the second festival.

Portrayals of Ivasiuk in the media and commemorative ceremonies became, in general, more politicized and nationalistic between 1987 and 1989, reflecting the changing cultural and political situation. Early in this period, accounts of Ivasiuk's life were usually cautious and apolitical, sometimes even omitting any mention of the composer's death. The most common portrayal of Ivasiuk during this period, particularly in 1989, reflects the growing Ukrainian national revival, depicting Ivasiuk as a great Ukrainian artist and sometimes as a martyr of the Brezhnev regime. A few accounts portrayed Ivasiuk as an internationalist, an artist who had great achievements in the field of Ukrainian culture but who was also committed to socialism and whose music appealed to all the peoples of the Soviet Union and abroad. Nonetheless, because Ivasiuk was popular and ideologically ambiguous, the composer could be used to support a variety of viewpoints. For example, in 1989 Ivasiuk was both tied to Ukrainian nationalism *and* used to attack the expression of nationalism at the Chervona Ruta festival.

Culture remained of interest to many Ukrainians in the 1990-91 period, but more explicitly political questions such as Ukraine's status within the Soviet Union began to take centre stage. Many Ukrainians, particularly in Kyiv and western Ukraine, also became increasingly radicalized. The expression of the myth of Ivasiuk during these years reflected these broader changes. Ivasiuk was a less prominent figure in the media during this period, reflecting a somewhat diminished popular interest in culture and the absence of meaningful anniversaries from the composer's life and death during this period.

The republican press again devoted some attention to Ivasiuk before the second Chervona Ruta festival, held in Zaporizhzhia in August 1991. A debate over Ivasiuk's legacy and proper role in the festival arose shortly before the festival. The commemoration and vindication of Ivasiuk also remained of widespread interest to the population of Lviv during this period. Notable monuments to the composer were unveiled and many Lvivites expressed their desire for a street to be named after Ivasiuk and for a new investigation to be initiated

into his death. The dominant myth of Ivasiuk also became more radical in 1991, at least in Lviv, with the composer more often being linked to the movement for Ukrainian independence.

The myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk evolved over the course of the perestroika era in a manner that reflected broader changes in political culture in Ukraine. Public expression of a desire to honour and reevaluate Ivasiuk began tentatively, at a time when there were still significant ideological restrictions on the press. By 1989, when the situation had changed so much that Ukrainians were fundamentally rethinking their own culture and history, the myth of Ivasiuk became more prominent but also remained diverse—reflecting varying degrees of Ukrainian national consciousness. By 1990-91, the less prominent but more nationalistic myth of Ivasiuk reflected the new prominence (in some regions, dominance) of nationalism and the movement for Ukrainian independence from the USSR and a corresponding decrease in cultural activism.

This thesis shows that the last years of Soviet rule in Ukraine are a fruitful period for detailed studies of transformations in politics and culture. Padraic Kenney's studies of central Europe, including Lviv, in 1989, serve as useful examples of the possibilities of studying cultural and political change during this period in greater depth.[1] Kenney's work also demonstrates the value of conducting interviews with individuals who were participants in witnesses to the events of that era, an approach which has also enriched this thesis. Research on other narrower time periods within the same era, or other regions or figures could yield similarly promising results. The attitudes of nationally conscious Ukrainians towards such elements of Ukrainian culture such as historical and architectural monuments, language, and history during this period (as represented, for example, in their communications with the

[1] Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Padraic Kenney, "Lviv's Central European Renaissance, 1987-1990," in *Lviv: A City in the Crossroads of Culture*, ed. John Czaplicka, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 303-12.

journal *Zhovten*) are one potentially fruitful area of research. The rehabilitation of national symbols and reexamination of Ukrainian history, to give two additional examples, could also be easily studied, at least for Lviv, and such research would yield additional insights into a period of enormous cultural change and productivity. Lviv is a particularly promising region for research because the cultural renaissance and political activism of the period produced a large number of pamphlets, *samvydav* publications and other useful sources. Another intriguing research topic from the perestroika period is the manner in which Ukrainian national revival proceeded (if at all) in areas where Ukrainian nationalism and national identity were much weaker than in Lviv. While it is clear that such a phase of transition and cultural ferment took place in Lviv, the question of what the 1987-91 period was like in other, less nationally conscious or culturally vibrant cities, is also worthy of study.

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